



HOPE not hate

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positive antidote
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July-August 2013
Issue no. 9 Price £3.50



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against hatred

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HOPE not hate

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anti-racist publication

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Editor
NICK LOWLES
nick@hopenothate.org.uk

European Editor
GRAEME ATKINSON
graeme@hopenothate.org.uk

Cover image: Faith leaders came together in Woolwich to pay their respect to Lee Rigby and show solidarity with the Muslim community

HOPE not hate is a bi-monthly publication providing information on hate groups and community initiatives to combat them.

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Write to us at:
HOPE not hate
PO Box 67476
London NW3 9RF

t: 020 7681 8660
e: office@hopenothate.org.uk

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Nick Lowles

EDITOR

nick@hopenothate.org.uk

We Are The Many

THE LAST FEW weeks have severely tested community relations in this country. The awful killing of Lee Rigby was quickly followed by a surge in support for the violently anti-Muslim English Defence League and attacks on mosques and other Islamic buildings across the country.

We witnessed two groups of extremists intent on stirring up hatred and division. The alleged killers of Lee Rigby told passers-by that that wanted to ignite a war on the streets of London. Within hours, EDL leader Stephen Lennon and a small group of his supporters were on the streets of Greenwich trying to do just that. Fortunately, London – and Britain – stood firm.

In the days that followed Woolwich there was a sharp spike in anti-Muslim attacks. Mosques were firebombed, women assaulted in the street and anti-Muslim hate widespread on the internet. Yet despite these terrible incidents, it could have been far worse. It was not because of the determination of people not to allow it. Our We Are The Many campaign chimed with a mood within communities across the country to not allow these haters divide us.

Much of this was the result of increasingly confident and mature Muslim communities. Most Muslim organisations instantly denounced Lee Rigby's killing and the ideology that is alleged to have fuelled it. They welcomed and took strength from the support that others gave them, especially other faith communities. Likewise, David Cameron's initial comments were welcomed by Muslim organisations and were in sharp contrast to the 'war on terror' rhetoric of previous years.

More importantly, ordinary people refused to let the extremists win. Most people understood that such actions

did not reflect the views of the British Muslim communities. Likewise, the vast majority of people saw the EDL as part of the problem. This positive mood was exemplified by the story of the trustees of York mosque inviting EDL demonstrators in for tea and ending up playing a game of football with them.

This window of goodwill is temporary and will close soon. That is why it is so important that we take maximum advantage of it and build on its recent success now. To this end, HOPE not hate will be supporting The Big Iftar during the month of Ramadan, which aims to open up mosques and Muslim households to the wider community. This will be followed, in September, by the production of localised HOPE not hate tabloid newspapers and newsletters to help spread a more positive message in local communities whilst also challenging hatred and debunking myths.

A CONSISTENT APPROACH

The killing of Lee Rigby and the conviction of six men for planning to bomb an EDL demo in Dewsbury highlight the continuing threat from Islamic extremism in this country. Anti-racists and anti-fascists need to adopt a more consistent approach to opposing extremism and be more willing to speak out against those who seek to divide us by whipping up hatred and religious violence.

RESPONDING TO UKIP

Over the last two months we have consulted with our supporters over our response to UKIP and concluded that while we will not take on UKIP as a party we will monitor and expose racists and its racist campaigns. More importantly, though, our supporters are keen for us to offer an alternative vision of Britain to that put forward by UKIP and backed by its supporters. ●

INSIDE

PAGE 12



FEATURE: HOW BRITAIN REACTED TO THE MURDER OF LEE RIGBY

PAGE 28



COMMENT: CHALLENGES FOR THE MEDIA IN REPORTING EXTREMISM



PAGE 40

INTERNATIONAL: THE 'DOUBLE GENOCIDE' REVISION OF HISTORY

HOPE not hate challenges the politics of hate and organised intolerance within society.

Initially established to counter the electoral rise of the BNP, HOPE not hate mobilises communities by providing a positive alternative to the politics of hate. Since it was founded in 2004, HOPE not hate has over 165,000 online supporters and over 50,000 followers on Facebook.

We are not aligned to any political party and will work with everyone wherever possible.

HOPE not hate comprises HOPE not hate Ltd and our charitable wing, HOPE not hate Educational Ltd.

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- 6 Home News Griffin guest of Syrian regime
- 7 UK at a glance Army warning over EDL membership
- 8 News From Europe Spanish fascists murdered
- 9 Europe at a glance Anti-racists clean up graffiti
- 10 World News Fight for LGB rights in US
- 11 Guest Column Nick Ryan on growth of hatred
- 12 Woolwich Special report on aftermath of
- 16 Woolwich The EDL's moment?
- 20 Woolwich Should we ban extremists?
- 22 Woolwich Media reporting of extremism
- 23 Profile of hate preacher Mohammed Al-Arifi
- 24 Charting Post-Woolwich incidents charted
- 26 Special feature Extremism and the Left
- 28 Essay How to combat rise of UKIP
- 31 Street party community action
- 32 Purple Rain UKIP under spotlight
- 33 Home News 'Forgotten' men of the BDP
- 34 Investigation LGB under attack in Africa
- 36 International Terror trial starts in Germany
- 38 International Killing of an anti-fascist hero
- 40 International 'Double genocide' under scrutiny
- 42 Group in Focus Hizb ut-Tahrir profiled
- 44 Campaign news Success of We Are The Many
- 46 Last word The London Recruits

CONTRIBUTORS



NICK RYAN

In *The Hate Game*, journalist and author Nick Ryan takes on those deliberately playing down anti-Muslim hatred.



SUNDER KATWALA

Sunder Katwala, Director of British Future, explores the challenges facing the media in reporting extremism.



DOVID KATZ

Dovid Katz, editor of DefendingHistory.com, looks at those who downplay the Holocaust by talking up the crimes of Soviet Russia.

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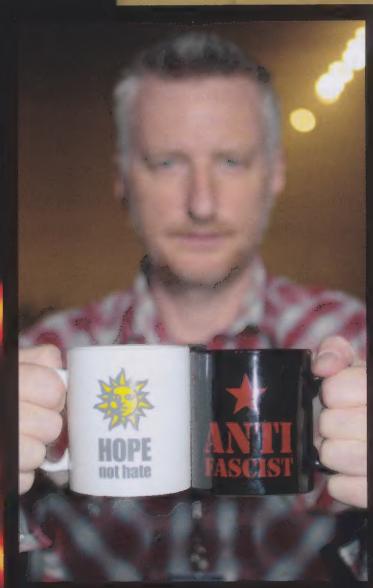
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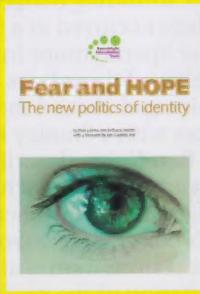
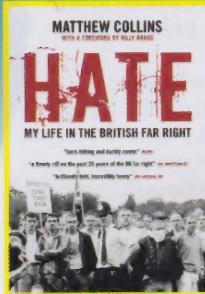
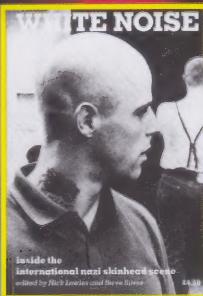
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BNP leader visits Syria

BNP CHAIRMAN Nick Griffin was part of a delegation of far-right European politicians invited as official guests of the Syrian Assad regime in July.

Griffin, who claimed he was on a fact finding mission to Damascus, wrote on Twitter that the Syrian capital was "a modern, bustling city" and life in Damascus appeared normal.

He forgot to mention two suicide bombs which had just exploded in Marja Square in the centre of Damascus killing 14 people and injuring 31.

Also in the European delegation were politicians from Belgium, Russia and Poland.

Griffin, who entered Syria via Lebanon, also wrote of his admiration for Hezbollah the Shiite Islamic militant group and political party based in Lebanon, backed by The Islamic Republic of Iran.

This is not Griffin's first trip to the Middle East. He attempted to build contacts with Colonel Gaddafi's Libya in the 1980's when he was a leading member of the National Front. Griffin met with Libyan officials in London and travelled to Libya to attempt secure financial aid for The National Front.



Griffin with Syrian Prime Minister Wael Nader Al-Halqi

EDL video labelled inappropriate and disrespectful

A FAKE video created by the English Defence League falsely showing Stephen Hawking supporting their movement has been condemned.

The Motor Neurone Disease Association described the sick video as "inappropriate and incredibly disrespectful".

The video appears to have been created by the Bournemouth EDL division and was widely shared on social networks. The footage takes advantage of Hawking's synthesised voice to put out the fake message of support and calls for no mosques or Muslim schools in the UK.

It appears to show the famous scientist and author say: "In England politicians are lying, useless cunts. Thankfully, groups like the EDL are helping the English media wake up to the threat posed by the Islamification of England."

Sally Light, chief executive of the Motor Neurone Disease Association, told the Huffington Post UK: "It is inappropriate and incredibly disrespectful to people living with motor neurone disease (MND).

Hate Preacher sets up victim helpline

RADICAL PREACHER Anjem Choudary has offered his support to a controversial new online initiative called 'Islamic Emergency Defence'.

Choudary has called for his supporters to join up as volunteers to the fledgling organisation which has promised to establish a network of "task forces" to redress wrongs and mete out instant justice.

The organisation has sparked further controversy by the name, whose initials are IED, also the initials for 'Improvised Explosive Device', the homemade bomb commonly used against troops in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The group's website includes a telephone hotline and calls for



people to report incidents of Islamophobia to them rather than reporting them to the police, promising to deal with issues in a "swift and Islamic manner".

Choudary admits to having an advisory role with the group but claims he doesn't run the vigilante organisation.

"People can look at it as a vigilante group but to protect and defend yourself is not illegal," he said.

Shadow justice secretary Sadiq Khan said: "What is hoped to be achieved by this except offence and tension?"

Labour MP Rushanara Ali said: "When groups encourage people to take the law into their own hands it needs to be stopped."



BNP National Organiser struck off

BNP NATIONAL organiser Adam Walker has been banned from teaching for life after he intentionally drove his car at children at a St George's Day fun day in 2011.

Walker was initially handed a two-year ban by the National College for Teaching and Leadership but the Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove overruled the decision and struck him off.

Walker, who has taught for more than 20 years, received a six month suspended prison sentence and was banned from driving for 12 months after admitting dangerous driving at Durham Crown Court.

The incident occurred at a St George's Day fun day being held in Tadhoe, near Spennymoor in 2011.

Walker believed three boys aged 12, 11, and 10 were being cheeky to him and chased them in his car before slitting the tyres on their bikes with a Stanley knife, the court was told.

Recorder Ben Nolan described Walker's actions as extremely dangerous and said the teacher could have killed the boys.

In his judgment for the Secretary of State's office, Alan Meyrick, said: "Mr Walker's convictions involved threatening behaviour and criminal damage of a serious nature aimed at children."

"The reputation of the profession would be seriously damaged by allowing a teacher with this combination of convictions to be able to teach again."

Soldiers Face Sack If Linked To EDL

MEMBERS OF THE armed forces have been warned that they face the sack if they take part in any English Defence League activities.

Defence Minister Mark Francois, said service personnel should not take part in any political activity after a number of photographs surfaced showing serving soldiers with firearms posing in front of EDL flags.

The minister said: "All Service personnel are expected to abide by the values and standards of the British Armed Forces in all they do. All those who are found to fall short of these high standards or have committed an offence under the Armed Forces Act are dealt with administratively or through the disciplinary process. Ultimately, such action may result in dismissal."



Mark Francois's comments were in answer to a Parliamentary Question from the Labour MP for Barnsley Central, Dan Jarvis. The Barnsley MP, who is himself a former British Army

officer, had asked the Ministry of Defence what advice had been issued to Army personnel regarding EDL membership, attending rallies and their conduct on social media.

EDL Man jailed for attempted mosque arson

AN EDL activist has been jailed after attempting to set fire to a Rhyll mosque.

John Parkin (pictured), of Towy, North Wales was jailed for 18 months at Mold Crown Court after he admitted threatening to burn down the mosque and a charge of religiously aggravated disorderly behaviour. He has also been banned from every mosque in the country.

This isn't the first time Parkin has threatened the Muslim community in Rhyll. In 2012 he was jailed for 10 months after threatening to blow up a mosque in the town.

One witness overheard him say: "I have

got guns. I want to shoot Muslims in the head." He also spoke about blowing up the local mosque.

Parkin later told police "Muslims are taking over the country. They need to go back to their own country. I am a racist. I hate Muslims"

Parkin was also a member of The Combined Ex Forces (CXF) an EDL splinter group and told anyone who was prepared to listen that he was an ex-serviceman who had served in

Bosnia and Iraq. But, in reality he had never left the country or seen active service after he was thrown out of the army in disgrace after an incident with drugs.



Postal Worker downloaded terror documents

A TERRORIST with links to radical Islamist Anjem Choudary has been convicted on terrorism charges

Postal worker Mohammed Benares possessed detailed guides in bomb-making, how to construct detonators and how to handle an AK-47.

Also found was the online al-Qaida magazine Inspire and a document entitled '39 Ways to Serve and Participate in Jihad'.

Benares, of Birmingham, was found guilty of three counts of possessing a record containing information of a kind likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism.

Mohammed Benares is also known to be linked to another Islamic extremist Abu Izzadeen. Police analysis of Benares's mobile phone found text messages between himself and two radical preachers.

Detective Chief Superintendent Kenny Bell, from West Midlands Police Counter Terrorism Unit, said: "These publications not only encourage the reader to carry out terrorist acts but also provide practical instructions.

"They are dangerous documents and we have seen them play a major part in influencing the actions of terrorists recently convicted of attack planning.

Benares was remanded in custody and will be sentenced in July.

Dartford EDL Thug Avoids Jail

AN EDL ACTIVIST from Dartford, Kent narrowly avoided jail in June after an unprovoked racist attack.

Salvatore Allegro, along with James Whitbread, from Rochester carried out the assault at Bank Underground station in August 2012.

The pair were both found guilty of a racially aggravated public order offence with Allegro also being found guilty of common assault.

Westminster Magistrates' Court heard how the victim Ahmad Farhan boarded a train at Bond Street station with his girlfriend. The couple soon began to hear racist taunts directed towards them.

The victim left the train at Bank station, followed by the drunken group of racists including Allegro and Whitbread singing racist songs.

Mr Farhan heard Salvatore Allegro say: "Go back to your own country you fucking Muslim cunt."

As he tried to exit the station Allegro and Whitbread launched their attack with other unknown assailants from the group joining in the beating.

The victim received blows to the face, head and body before falling over and striking his head.

Both men received a six-month prison sentence, suspended for 18 months along with banning them from engaging in any EDL activities for 18 months.

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 ■ Special report: Woolwich from page 12



EUROPE | Violence against Muslims is on the rise

FROM EUOSERVER



VIOLENCE AGAINST MUSLIMS in Europe is on the rise among the handful of member states who officially record incidents. A report published by the Vienna-based Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA) reveals that Finland, France, and Sweden all registered increases in attacks between 2010 and 2011. Only Austria registered a decline.

Antisemitic attacks dropped in France and Sweden during the same period. The FRA

report notes the trends do not reflect the prevalence of racist, xenophobic and related crimes in member states because most incidents go unreported. Other issues include how member states define these crimes and the willingness of witnesses to report the incidents. Finland recorded 14 cases of anti-Muslim crime in 2009, 15 in 2010 and 14 in 2011. In France, authorities attribute the increase to applying rules on how to record the incidents.

The report says member states with the highest officially recorded rates do not necessarily have the highest rates of such crimes. UK-based Tell Mama records anti-Islamic attacks and has noted 632 anti-Muslim hate incidents since March 2012. In June, a pregnant Muslim woman suffered a miscarriage after an alleged attack by two skinheads, for wearing an Islamic face veil, in the suburbs of Paris.

BELGIUM | Extremists end futile renewal operation

BY WIM HAELESTERMAN FOR AFF-VERZET/RÉSISTANCES IN BRUSSELS.

ON 2 JUNE the far-right Vlaams Belang (VB) ended the ambitious renewal operation it started in 2012 with Gerolf Annemans' appointment as chairman. So far, the entire manoeuvre has proved fruitless. Little has changed and media attention on the nationalist party's 're-invention' has been minimal. In recent months, the party tried to re-profile itself as a 'social people's party'. The party's monthly journal changed its style slightly and a new nationwide campaign was launched, an expensive effort that included posters, brochures and leaflets depicting a 'traditional' Flemish family as a bunch of defenceless cows milked by Francophone Wallonia.

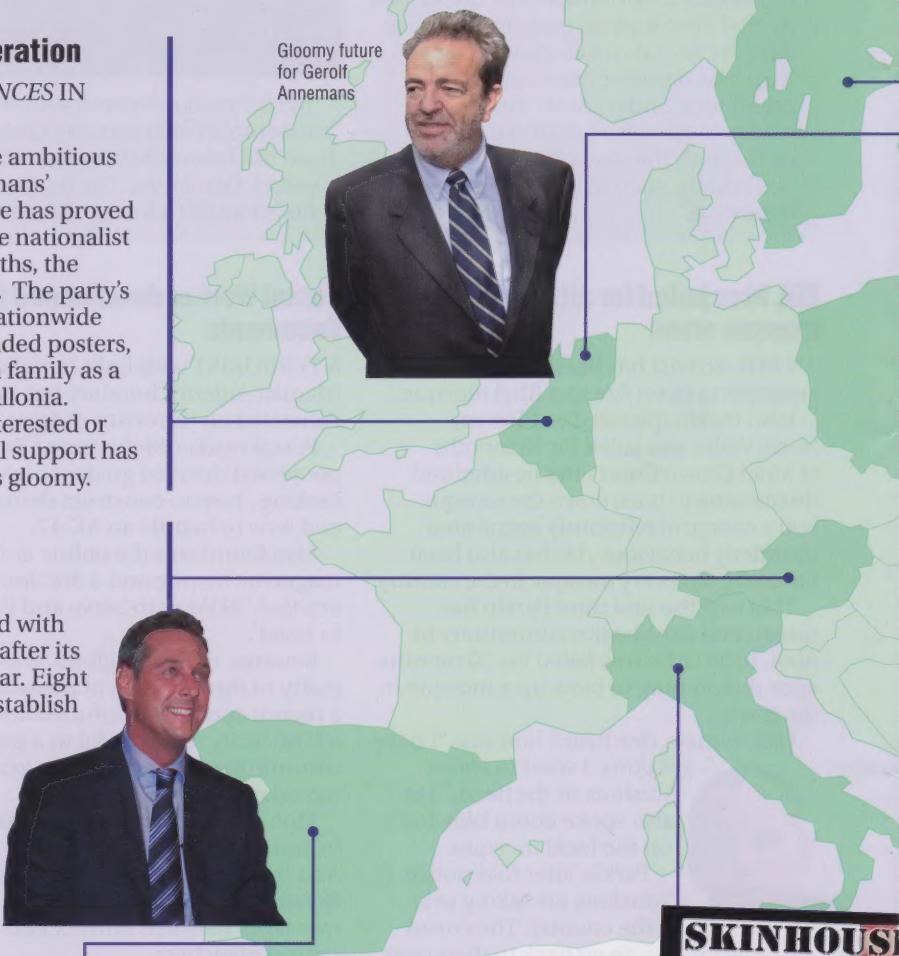
The main problem for Annemans is that no one is interested or listening. For the first time in decades, the VB's electoral support has plunged below 10% in Flanders and party's future looks gloomy.

AUSTRIA | Austria's Far Right reunites

FROM MARTIN JORDAN IN VIENNA

THE FREEDOM PARTY in Carinthia (FPK) has reunited with the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) in a bid to survive after its devastating regional election disaster in March this year. Eight years after the late Jörg Haider split from the FPÖ to establish a new far right political outlet with a stronghold in Carinthia, the federal state is looking at the shattered remains of Haider's corrupt political legacy.

The reunification as well as the recent election disaster was expected. After Haider's death in 2008, one scandal after another surfaced. His political legacy is buried and FPÖ boss Heinz-Christian Strache (pictured) is nervously anticipating September's national elections.



SPAIN | Strange deaths of two violent fascists

FROM SANDRA CORTES IN VALÈNCIA

TWO MEMBERS of the Spanish extreme-right have been found dead in mysterious circumstances. The first, Ignacio Alkain Iturbide, 61, a former member of the fascist terrorist group Basque Spanish Battalion, who was responsible for the death of at least seven Basque citizens, was found dead in June in a mountainous area near Bilbao.

Along with Ladislao Zabala, he was considered responsible for murders committed by

fascist groups in the late 1970s and early 1980s and sentenced to 231 years in prison in 1985.

One of his victims was a 17-year-old left-wing Basque separatist kidnapped and shot in the head in 1979.

Vicente Lloret, a well-known nazi skinhead from Canals in València, was found dead on 6 June in his car with a bullet in his head. Lloret was convicted in 1999 for stabbing a young anti-fascist.

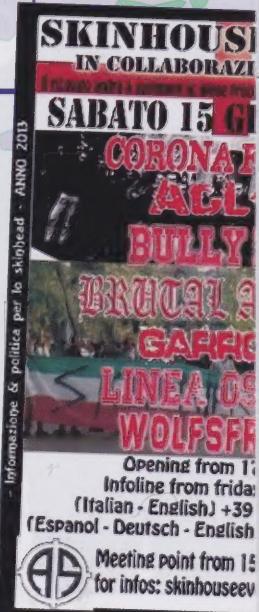
● www.antifeixistes.org

ITALY | Nazi bands play in Milan

FROM JTA.

DESPITE CONDEMNATION by Milan's mayor and other political figures, hundreds of far-right extremists converged on Milan for a concert by skinhead and nazi bands in mid-June. Video and photos on the website of *La Repubblica* newspaper showed youths with tattoos and shaven heads and wearing black T-shirts with skinhead and nazi slogans and logos.

The concert was organised by a group called Skinhouse Milano and bands and participants are believed to have come from Germany, France, Spain and Italy. Jewish Milan MP,





SWEDEN | Nazis latch onto unrest

FROM DANIEL VERGARA FOR EXPO IN STOCKHOLM

IN MAY, Sweden was hit by a wave of civil disturbances, many involving immigrant youths, which began in the Stockholm suburb of Husby and spread to other towns and cities. Public debate and media coverage highlighted large-scale unemployment and segregation in housing as possible causes of the unrest.

Swedish hooligans and nazis quickly latched onto the trouble to form a vigilante mob called 'The Swedish Citizen Army'. Around 50 hooligans and nazis from the

Party of Swedes and the Swedish Resistance Movement moved in to terrorise Botkyrka, a Stockholm suburb.

Among the rampaging mob was local Party of Swedes politician, Daniel Spansk. The 800-strong 'Citizen Army' claimed it was made up of Swedes "tired of immigrant violence."

The anti-fascist magazine *Expo* gained access to the Facebook group revealing that seven of the mob's leaders are linked with nazi organisations.



THE NETHERLANDS | Wilders on stage in Los Angeles

FROM JEROEN BOSCH IN AMSTERDAM FOR ALERT! AND ANTIFA-NET

THE AMERICAN Freedom Alliance held its third conference on 'The future of Europe' in June. Geert Wilders (pictured) of the Dutch right-wing populist Freedom Party was the keynote speaker. He kicked off the conference in front of an audience containing notorious anti-Islam alarmists as Daniel Pipes, Robert Spencer and Bat Ye'or, the author of *Eurabia*.

"Europe," Wilders said, "is in a terrible condition. The economy is a shambles. Islamic immigrants cause riots and terrorise local communities. And while people's throats are cut under the cries 'Allahu Akbar', the authorities try to calm things down and claim Islam has nothing to do with it."



POLAND | Anti-racists in show of solidarity

FROM NEVER AGAIN ASSOCIATION.

THE NEVER AGAIN Association, together with Projekt:Polska, took action in mid-June to show solidarity with African residents by painting out graffiti daubed by racists at the entrances of an African restaurant, La Mama, and a nearby African shop. Both are located in Warsaw's Muranow district, the area of the infamous Jewish Ghetto during the Nazi occupation.

The restaurant is a key meeting point for Africans. Graffiti included racist text and an image of a man on the gallows.

Action was organised after the graffiti was discovered and brought together several hundred participants mobilised through Facebook. It drew positive coverage in the media and was praised by Warsaw mayor Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz.

The incident took place against the background of a series of hate crimes in several Polish regions. Anti-racists attribute it to an increased street presence of the newly formed far-right Nationalist Movement which draws its strength from the racist football hooligan subculture.

SERBIA | Fascists in surveillance camera stunt

FROM BALKAN INSIGHT

THE SERBIAN fascist group SNP Nasi says it is placing surveillance cameras in apartments near a new lesbian and gay centre in Belgrade in a bid to shut it down. The group claims to be seeking proof that "prostitution" is being organised at the centre.

"Because of the fear for children [in the neighbourhood] because of the people coming to the centre and because of the risk of infection, SNP Nasi will help to close the LGBT centre where prostitution is organised," it said. Gay activist Predrag Azdejkovic said members of SNP Nasi should be arrested for being part of "a para-police organisation". Serbian society remains deeply homophobic, and gay people tend to live in isolation and with a high degree of secrecy.

In 2009, 2011 and 2012, the authorities banned gay pride parades after police declared they could not safeguard marchers against threats of violence. A Gay Pride march went ahead in 2010 but football fans and members of right-wing organisations threw stones and missiles at the police and set buildings and vehicles on fire.

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- The Baltics special report page 40



Skinhouse Milano event, which took place on June 14, 2013.

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Emanuele Fiano, called for the concert to be banned, but police said that the event did not represent a threat to public order. The same day, Mirko Viola, a right-wing extremist, was jailed for sending a threatening message to the president of the Jewish community in Rome.

Viola had been sentenced in April to two years and eight months house arrest for his role in the nazi web forum Stormfront. House arrest barred Viola from using the internet but, according to the Italian media, police found that he had not only sent e-mails but also had mailed a postcard to Rome Jewish community President Riccardo Pacifici".

SRI LANKA & BURMA | Attacks against Muslim intensify in Sri Lanka

SOURCE: BBC NEWS ONLINE

HARDLINE MONKS and Buddhists are attempting to ban the certification of halal meat in Burma, according to the BBC.

It is the latest move in a series of attacks by Buddhist monks on Muslim people and beliefs, targeted because of their alleged sympathy for the former regime. The majority Sinhalese Buddhists are reported to have warned local people not to rent out houses to Muslims and have engaged in violent abuse against them, much of it carried out by the hardline Buddhist Strength Force (BSF).

The leadership has called on residents to each become "an unofficial policeman against Muslim extremism" and warned that Muslims were "destroying the Sinhala race".

Grievances against the Muslim minority include

allegations that they are trying to recruit people to their religion and that there are too many mosques in the country.

In the past, the Muslim population has tried to engage in dialogue with the monks and the BSF rather than engage in confrontation.

Two days of rioting in Burma

And in an escalation of the continuing violence between Buddhists and Muslims in Burma, the BCC reports that a Burmese man has been jailed for 26 years for setting a Buddhist woman alight at a petrol station.

The attack by 48-year-old Nay Win led to two days of violence in the Shan State in May. The attack was unusual

in that the majority of the attacks so far in the country have been carried out by Buddhists against Muslims. This is the first instance of a Muslim being jailed for such an offence.

Following the petrol station attack, Buddhist with sticks roamed the streets in the town of Lashio armed with sticks on the lookout Muslims, it is reported.

More than 40 mainly Muslim people have died in violence following an argument at a Muslim-owned shop in the central town of Meiktila, with perpetrators being jailed for the offences. Last year. Nearly 200 people died and countless others were forced to flee their homes following ethnic violence in Rakhine.

AUSTRALIA | Skinheads launch racist recruitment campaign

SKINHEADS HAVE launched a racist recruitment campaign in Perth's south-eastern suburbs. The move prompted Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs Minister Mike Nahan to warn that police will investigate the campaign.

Dozens of stickers were posted around a suburban shopping centre in mid-June featuring an image of a balaclava-clad man performing a nazi salute and wearing a jacket with a swastika urging people to "Support your local skinhead". They included the internet address for an international white supremacist forum.

The growth of white supremacist groups is very concerning, said Nahan, noting: "Any form of racial vilification or hatred will not be tolerated in Western Australia".

A police spokeswoman said prosecution under current legislation, which addresses racial vilification, may be difficult because the material did not identify any specific groups of people.



Destruction is seen in central Lashio, Quarter Three, after anti-Muslim rioting



A series of anti-gay hate crimes have rocked New York City including the shooting of 32-year-old Mark Carson

USA | Hate violence targets gays and lesbians nationwide

FROM ERIC O'NEILL IN WASHINGTON DC

CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVISTS believe a five-year-old law may be behind a recent rise in hate violence targeting gays and lesbians.

In 2008, California voters passed Proposition 8 which dictates that "only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized".

Civil rights experts believe the US Supreme Court is set to overturn Proposition 8.

Gay rights activists will not win everything when the court rules, but it is likely they will make significant headway in securing the right for consenting American adults to wed. Advancement has already occurred in 12 states, including the conservative state of Iowa, allowing gay and lesbian couples lawfully to wed.

A series of anti-gay hate crimes have rocked New York City including the

shooting of 32-year-old Mark Carson near Stonewall Inn, an historic site where patrons famously defended themselves against police abuse in 1969.

A rash of violent assaults preceded and followed Mark's killing. In Columbus, Ohio, three separate anti-gay mob attacks left one person hospitalised. And in California, Orange County officials are reporting that violent assaults, harassment, and intimidation against gays and lesbians have increased by 62.5 percent.

Guest column...

THE HATE GAME

Downplaying anti-Muslim hatred is a dangerous game, argues **Nick Ryan**.

AS A REPORTER, I've probably had to think too much about 'hate'. I've heard it in the crazy anti-semitic theories of a barber in a Hezbollah-supporting slum of southern Beirut. I've had it from an Israeli truck driver talking about 'Arabs who don't die'. I've also been lectured in the niceties of hate from Combat 18 members, BNP supporters, EDL followers, Egyptian Salafists, conservative African Christians talking about homosexuality and AIDS, and in the affable racist overtones of some of my UKIP-supporting neighbours.

It was also on my mind after the UK witnessed a large spike in anti-Muslim incidents, following the murder of Drummer Lee Rigby in Woolwich on 22 May.

The murder was an outrageous act, utterly condemned by all (including almost every British Muslim organisation). The outpouring of grief was genuine: our nation seemed to pull together, despite the alleged desire to ignite a war – just as David Copeland had wanted in 1999, and Tim McVeigh in Oklahoma four years before. The English Defence League obliged by sending 100 of their number to get drunk and hurl beer bottles at police.

Almost immediately the backlash began. Anti-Muslim hate crime monitoring project Tell MAMA recorded 212 anti-Muslim incidents in the week following the Woolwich murder. A mosque in Muswell Hill, north London, was burned to the ground, the words 'EDL' scrawled on its walls. An Islamic school in Chislehurst was subjected to an arson attack while its pupils slept. Two men were arrested after an attempt to firebomb a mosque in Grimsby.



There were other mosque attacks in Braintree, Rhyl, Bletchley; then more recently swastikas were sprayed on the windows of a mosque in Worcestershire, while a homemade bomb exploded against a mosque wall in Walsall. In Newport, Muslim graves were desecrated with swastikas and crude signs for UKIP, the BNP and NF.

In response, police posted 24-hour armed guards around key Muslim sites in the capital. The Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Bernard Hogan-Howe, said that Islamophobic attacks in the city had risen eightfold in the days after Woolwich. His force recorded a massive +145.7% spike in 'Islamophobic crime' (the Met's definition) comparing May 2012 with May 2013 and a 31.1% spike year-on-year for the same period. ACPO – the Association of Chief Police Officers – also recorded 136 anti-Muslim incidents reported direct via its True Vision online service in the week after the murder.

Analysis of Tell MAMA's data by Teesside University suggested Far Right (mainly EDL) activists were linked to one-third of all online incidents. Academics such as Chris Allen of Birmingham University, pointed to EU-wide studies of widespread under-reporting of such incidents, suggesting the true picture was much graver than reported.

The counter-attack against Tell MAMA began with two articles

by Andrew Gilligan in the *Sunday Telegraph*, which claimed that a majority of incidents were online (57%) and those recorded elsewhere – against mosques, involving hijab pulling, etc – were 'minor'. He alleged that MAMA's funding was being cut by government due to concern about its methods.

The piece was circulated widely on social media. Other commentators followed: Tony Parsons in *The Mirror*, blithely calling two Muslim women he saw in the street as 'batman and batwoman'; Charles Moore joined again in the *Sunday Telegraph*; followed by the right-wing Commentator website; and then the Henry Jackson Society's Douglas Murray, calling any attempt to link anti-semitism with anti-Muslim hatred 'a terrible trap' and devoting a considerable amount of time to picking apart the notion of 'Islamophobia' (he once suggested the EDL was a 'grassroots response from non-Muslims to Islamism') and has also been roundly criticised for his attitudes by Paul Goldman, ex-Tory MP and editor of the prominent ConservativeHome blog.

The notorious US counter-jihadists whom HOPE not hate has just had banned from the UK, Robert Spencer and Pamela

Geller, also leapt in, calling Tell MAMA 'a hate group' and frequently linking mainstream Muslims and Islam with extremist actions, suggesting they were mandated by their religious texts to act in such a manner.

This is not an academic debate. It is a brutal bar room brawl for the most part, fought over social media and in the pages of blogs and the right-wing press, in the most febrile of atmospheres. It does not take a genius to figure it may then play out at some point into the real world.

I cannot understand what those leading the charge against anti-Muslim hate hope to achieve: more conflict? The death of Lee Rigby must not be used to justify or downplay hate elsewhere. The British public and this country are great champions of tolerance. When nationwide surveys show that 83% of Muslims are loyal to this country – yet other surveys reveal 'we' (non-Muslims) continue to see them as a threat – such reality denial allows fear, then hatred, of the 'Other' to creep in. As members of the press, we bear a heavy burden for reporting accurately. Let us not fall into the trap of Rwanda, Bosnia and other countries riven by civil war, where media stoked hate with terrifying results.

■ **NICK RYAN** is a journalist and communications advisor, author of extremism exposé *HOMELAND: Into a World of Hate* [@ryanscribe](http://www.nickryan.net)

We Are The

Dave Porter reports on how Britain reacted to the awful murder of Lee Rigby



Local residents
wave teapots at EDL
protestors in York.

Many



As a way of stopping fascists in their tracks, it takes some beating – invite the EDL in for tea and biscuits when they come marching on your mosque hate banners in hand.

But that's just what happened in York in the wake of the Woolwich killing of Drummer Lee Rigby.

This disarming move was perhaps the most notable – and surprising – example of the imaginative response of the Muslim community to the gruesome murder of the 19-year-old soldier.

Members of the mosque had got wind that the EDL was planning a march on their place of worship and rather than meet confrontation with confrontation, took another tack by inviting protestors in for an English cup of tea and a chat. The gamble paid off and was even followed by a friendly game of football.

Mohammed El-Gomati, a member of the mosque and a lecturer at the University of York, explained in an article that the invitation was an attempt to prevent the polarisation of views which the Woolwich incident could have provoked.

"People are focusing on their differences. We felt that another response was needed, one that might provide a calm space in which we could listen to, and hear, one another. We realised that we did not fully understand the EDL stance in York and, from what we could make out, that they did not fully understand us either," he wrote in the *Guardian*.

There are other examples of communities rallying to prevent the spread of hate politics.

HOPE not hate's We Are The Many campaign highlighted such a situation in Shrewsbury, where a plan to open a pray centre by the local Bangladeshi Welfare Society faced fierce opposition from the likes of the BNP, who waged a vicious online smear campaign against it.

Undaunted, local people rallied in support of the plan with more than 712 people signing an open letter in support of the Muslim community's right to worship in just five days.

One message received by HOPE not hate in support of the plan crystallised many residents' feelings: "We do not believe that the extremists of the British National Party or the English Defence League – who have organised the online Facebook protests and the most recent demonstration – speak for the decent, ordinary people of Shrewsbury. We believe that if extremists are allowed to succeed it will only encourage them to spread their racism and hatred."

Nationally, more than 46,000 people signed HOPE not hate's open letter in the *Daily Mirror* aimed at countering the message of hate being spread by far right groups. In Gloucester, 424 people signed a similar letter of solidarity with the Muslim community after a man tried to burn down its mosque.

But the overall picture post-Woolwich is far from clear. Looking at the many figures bandied about post-Woolwich you could be forgiven for thinking that latent Islamophobia has been unleashed in communities across the UK. To mention just a few:

Faith Matters and Tell Mama

reported 162 anti-Muslim incidents in a week following the murder – compared with a previous average of five a day

13 mosques were targeted in the wake of the attack on Lee Rigby, varying in seriousness from graffiti to one mosque being burned down completely

130,000 people joined the EDL's Facebook site following Woolwich

74% of anti-Muslim incidents reported to Tell Mama were online, while 58% of incidents were directed towards women.

But like all figures these lack a context and it would be hard to argue they point to a permanent shift in attitudes. There are other statistics – and stories – which indicate a more complex response to the events in Woolwich and how we as a society have responded to them.

A YouGov survey actually reports an increase in positive attitudes towards Islam and British Muslims. 63% of those polled believe the majority of Muslims are 'good British citizens' and one third believe that Islam is compatible with the British way of life. Tellingly – and despite the Facebook figures above – two-thirds of people said they were against the EDL/BNP protests which took place in the wake of Woolwich, with an impressive 84% saying they would never consider joining the EDL.

The other generally-agreed factor to come through strongly in the aftermath of Woolwich is the mature response of the Muslim community itself, in the face of what could have been a potentially violent backlash. All sectors of the community were quick to condemn the murder as anti-Islamic and unconnected with their faith and community, and this was coupled with an understanding that extremism within the Muslim community must be rooted out.

Shabir Subar, director of the Zainabiya Islamic Centre in Milton Keynes, stated in the *Guardian* that attacks on the community in the aftermath of Woolwich had made them more determined to "speak out against terrorism and dissociate ourselves from such attacks – these men don't belong to Islam and Islam doesn't belong to them. In the past Muslims just wanted to keep their heads down,

but we realised we have to stand up and be counted."

Commenting on the YouGov survey, conducted in wake of Woolwich, Nottingham University lecturer Dr Matthew Goodwin, said people are much more willing to make positive statements about the Muslim community than previously and he denied there has been a 'spike in prejudice'.

But looking again at the various figures being bandied about, it's a reasonable question to ask why 130,000 people have joined the EDL Facebook site and whether this represents a hardening of people's attitudes.

Tell Mama director of conflict resolution, Fiyaz Mughal, from Faith Matters, told *HOPE not hate* that the feverish online presence of far right groups had been given added momentum by the events in Woolwich, with previously latent Islamophobia now being openly expressed.

He said: "People did not say it physically but it was there. We believe it is a forceful minority that is gaining direction. Many of these people create multiple accounts under false names and what they do is confuse the victim about the level of abuse directed at them. They will also post to multiple sites.

"The effect can be worse than a verbal threat. If you're shouted at in the street you know who's shouting at you, and they are probably going to walk away. In the online world you don't know where these tweets or postings against you are coming from and it is very disorientating and with a much longer-term effect that chips away at the victim."

Fiyaz said that while the high number of anti-Muslim incidents reported to Tell Mama since Woolwich is now beginning to tail off, the level of activism online by the Far Right has not.

He added that the increased number of incidents reported against Muslim women in particular was generally due to their more vulnerable presence on the street. As well as advice about keeping a log of hate incidents and reporting the more serious ones to the police, Tell Mama also advises women to invest in noise alarms to give them added confidence while out in public.

"The positive to come out of

this is that awareness is increasing about the need to tackle some of these issues, particularly in mosques. They are slowly starting to look at their own security and safety. It's going to take two or three years, but it is a positive step," Fiyaz said.

Other Muslim leaders have spoken openly of the need to tackle extremism within mosque and communities. Usama Hasan, a researcher in Islamic studies at the Quilliam Foundation, says stronger leadership needs to be taken to address a "twisted theology that easily brainwashes vulnerable people, some of whom are intelligent university students and graduates."

On the ground, attacks against Muslim communities – whether in the form of graffiti, arson attacks or pigs' heads being left outside mosques and homes – has provoked an equally strong surge of support from the wider community. Ahmed Sabik, the imam of fire-bombed Grimsby mosque, has spoken of how they have been overwhelmed by the huge number from local people sending emails and cards deplored the actions of the arsonists and expressing their support for the Muslim community.

"People have been saying 'we

HOPE not hate worked with the Islamic Society of Britain and British Future to bring faith leaders join worshippers at Greenwich mosque in a show of solidarity.



support you' and 'these crimes don't represent us' and 'you are welcome here'. We were so happy because it shows we are all united against these people who wanted to destroy our harmony," he is reported as saying.

Then there is the dignified statement issued by Lee Rigby's family, which is as firm a rebuttal of far right hate politics as you could wish for. The family said that Lee had "had many friends from different walks of life – some with different religious beliefs and cultures. But this made no difference to Lee – he always treated others with the greatest of respect."

Julian Bond, director of the Christian Muslim Forum, thinks the speed with which Muslim organisations condemned the killing as well as taking part in the memorial walk in Woolwich, was also a strong factor in defusing a combustible atmosphere.

"They were very clear in saying this had nothing to do with Islam and does not represent Muslims," he said.

The steady work between Muslims and other faith groups over the years, and the relationships which have been built up within communities, meant that a united face could be presented to the world in condemnation of the killing. But, says Julian, there are still difficult issues to address.

"The things that the far right are saying, they are enabled to say that because there are other people who think those things and maybe say them in private but don't have the same public platform," he said.

Less obvious signs of support post-Woolwich came from the online community in the form of hackers collective, Anonymous, which vowed to publish the home addresses and phone numbers of EDL members in response to far-right street protests.

A statement issued by Anonymous said: "Your constant belligerence, like a pack of raving ignoramuses, furthers only bigotry and segregation. You have angered us considerably and summoned our wrath irrevocably."

And a further banishment of the EDL to the fringes of society came with the announcement by Help For Heroes that £3,000 raised by Tommy Robinson would be

rejected. It said a Just Giving page set up by the EDL would be shut down and all donations refunded.

Julie Siddiqi, executive director of the Islamic Society of Britain, says that – despite the attacks on mosques and individuals – things have been "overwhelmingly positive" in the wake of Woolwich. She stressed that verbal and physical attacks on Muslims are nothing new, and neither is the level of abuse directed towards Muslims online, but notwithstanding these the level of support from ordinary members of the public has been deeply reassuring.

"I think all Muslim organisations have been overwhelmed by the offers of support and people saying 'we don't blame you for anything'. I say to people, 'don't get despondent', it's really only a small number compared with other people," she said.

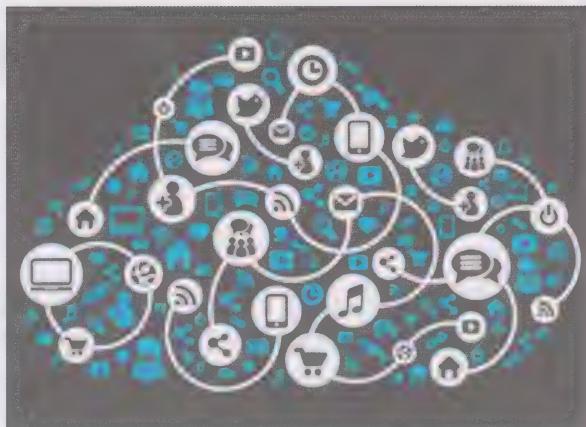
"What's happened is an opportunity to bring people together more than before – I feel quite optimistic out of something really ugly."

Julie said that since the attacks of 7/7 so much work has been putting into building community and faith relations that this has been reflected in the levels of support of the Muslim community. And while the death of Lee Rigby was something the far right have definitely latched upon to try and revive their fortunes, this has not been mirrored in support for them on the ground, even if their online support appears strong.

"Facebook is interesting because it's easy to do that. If the EDL set themselves up as a proper group and ended up with 20,000 or 10,000 card-carrying members, then that would be more scary, but it's not the case," she said.

The way forward, Julie argues, is a continuation of the 'tea and cakes' strategy of bringing different people and different communities together to break down barriers.

She said: "Having your neighbour round for tea and cakes always works. We've seen some brilliant stuff like this and I just think the more, the better. The really funny thing is that it works and people have latched onto it. It's actually been happening for years but the way the story has come out epitomises



We Are The Many on social media

- 46,121 people signed our letter
- 28,771 new people have signed up to HnH
- We spent £2,500 on Google and Facebook adverts and the stats were:
 - Total Impressions on internet pages: 17,828,918
 - Total Reach – individual computers these adverts were seen on (UK Adults): 5,568,920
 - That means that 11.6% of all UK adults would have seen one of our adverts.

what we should be doing anyway."

This experience is echoed by Ibrahim Mogra, assistant general secretary of the Muslim Council of Britain, who says that while they received some "vitriolic" messages in the wake of Woolwich, the majority were overwhelmingly supportive.

"There are some very heart-warming messages we have received from people on the ground. We have had a growing number of mosques visited by their local non-Muslim neighbours wanting to become better friends and to get to know each other better," he said.

Ibrahim said that in many ways the response has been similar to the one experienced after the 9/11 attacks, and that although tragic that something like a death should bring people closer together, it shows that Lee Rigby's death will not have been in vain.

He added: "We have many examples of the wonderful support mosques have received, including offers from Jewish friends to keep an eye on a neighbouring mosque. A similar thing happened during the summer riots with Sikh members of the community looking after and protecting mosques while their Muslim neighbours went for late night prayers at Ramadan." ●

A movement

Matthew Collins investigates how Woolwich has given to the English Defence League a new lease of life and confirmed the growing irrelevance of the British National Party

IN FEBRUARY of this year, a hilarious but telling student video of 30 English Defence League (EDL) activists drunk and disorganised while demonstrating in Cambridge went viral.

The organisation was on its last legs. Paralysed by infighting, factionalising and disinterest from the top down, there was little left on the bones for even the satellite shower that orbits around the EDL to pick off. The EDL's leader, Stephen Lennon, had been released from jail only days previously. His co-Leader and cousin, Kevin Carroll, was claiming bail conditions prohibited him from taking the reigns in Lennon's absence.

A month later in Manchester, another EDL demonstration attracted some 500 supporters in an attempt to revive the EDL and show there was still life in the movement. A mixture of gang rivalries and petty squabbles saw the march move on with only a couple of hundred people. Gangs of 'Infidels' and football casuals milled around on the periphery. There was no word from Carroll, and Lennon claimed to have taken a caravan holiday with his children. Hel Gower, entrusted with running the EDL in their absence, didn't dare show up either.

In April rumours spread there had been a violent and armed assault by a gang of Muslims at Lennon's home and – surprise, surprise – Lennon had been arrested. It didn't feature once in the mainstream media. Discomfort set in.

Imitating Don Vito Corleone, Lennon shuffled into action by disrupting plans for the 'March for England' protest in Brighton by counter-Jihadists and far-right activists and initiated a split in the rival English Volunteer Force (EVF), all without seemingly leaving the comfort of the pub. At a St George's Day barbecue held with his closest and much diminished confidantes he also agreed

to remove the administrators of the EDL's Facebook page, which had degenerated into another symptom of the EDL's malaise. But he was disinterested. After four years of violence, arrests, intimidation and mutual harassment, even Lennon could see that the EDL was running out of steam and worst of all, impetus.

Street movement

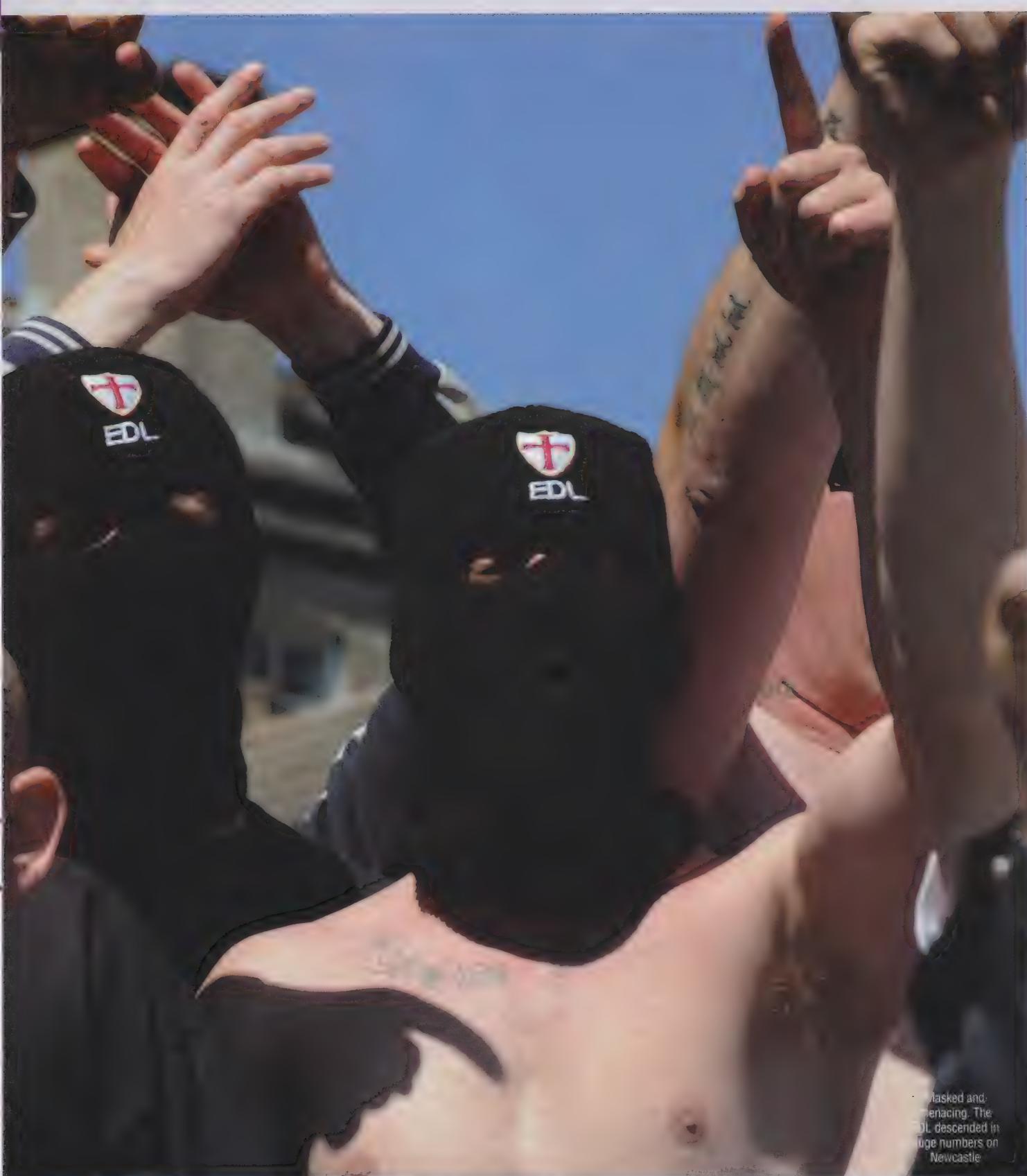
In the rival British National Party, their EDL "problem" was now considered over. BNP leader Nick Griffin and his lieutenants had been rubbing shoulders with former EDL personnel for months. Stephen Lennon's imprisonment for passport fraud had been the long-awaited God-send for Griffin and his plans to replace the EDL with a street movement totally aligned to him and the BNP. His big problem was an inexperienced and lifeless rump of a party struggling to make any headway politically, and May's County Council elections were looking like a disaster. Concentrating on mopping up what was left of the EDL has been his fallback plan post-Brussels for well over a year.

In May, as the BNP fell prey to the rise of UKIP, EDL leader Stephen Lennon openly backed UKIP's rising star. Few actually saw Lennon's backing as a major obstacle for UKIP as it would have been for the BNP. Fewer still paid much attention.

Then the rape lie began. Apparently from nowhere a story began to emerge from within EDL circles, trumpeted by Lennon and Carroll themselves, that either a seven-year-old girl or a year seven pupil, had been raped by a Muslim gang in a school toilet in their [conveniently] hometown of Luton. Spleens were vented, threats were made and riots on the streets were promised.



reborn?



lashed and
menacing. The
DL descended in
large numbers on
Newcastle



It went on for three to four days until *HOPE not hate* called them out on it. It was a lie.

It was a sick, dreamt-up lie, and plans to reignite the hate machine fell humiliatingly flat. Carroll switched off his Twitter account from where most of the bile emanated until the fury died down. Bedfordshire police threatened to investigate the two leaders for incitement.

The EDL had a long-planned national demonstration in Newcastle in May. With people inside the EDL beginning to call Lennon to account for his public absences since his release from prison, there was further unrest over the rape story falling flat.

At an EDL demonstration in Leeds earlier in the month, a number of key figures from the Yorkshire region, "out of the loop" from the "southern mafia" in and around Lennon and Carroll in Luton, demanded that Lennon turn up to the national demonstration in Newcastle or they would form their own breakaway Yorkshire Defence League. Lennon said that his bail conditions would not allow him to travel.

Then on 22 May, British soldier Lee Rigby was murdered in Woolwich in south east London and everything changed.

Social media, the bedrock of the counter-Jihad movement and the EDL in particular, exploded in venomous fury and rage. Attacks on Mosques and Muslims were openly discussed and

encouraged. For many, blinded by rage, this was their D-Day.

EDL banners

By nightfall, as police and forensic officers were examining the scene and television cameras from around the world descended on Woolwich, dozens of locals mixed with EDL members who wore balaclavas and held EDL banners, before Lennon, ascending from the shadows tired and emotional, ranted at the world's media that "enough is enough". Like a Phoenix from the ashes, Lennon's star was reborn.

As EDL supporters clashed with the police in South London, raining bottles and bricks on them and the media present, the BNP was sending out its first email to its supporters. Their leader, Nick Griffin, the MEP of the murdered soldier, was stuck in Strasbourg recording a recruitment message and desperately trying to coordinate the BNP's response, raise funds, and get back to London.

Excitedly, the BNP website banged on about "civil war", but there was still no BNP activist on the ground in Woolwich for the next two days. They fired out more emails begging for funds, but no BNP personnel were either available or willing to identify themselves on the ground as being from the party. They even suggested a campaign to get Griffin back onto Question Time.

"This was supposed to be our big moment but we were totally absent from the news and we had no materials anyway," one BNP officer complained to us.

By the time Griffin arrived in London, two days after the murder, only Sky Television and Russia Today had any airtime for him. Over 80,000 people had already joined the EDL's Facebook pages, following its running commentary. Despite bragging that they were recruiting well on the back of Woolwich, internally the BNP was at a loss as to what to do next. What was interesting was how the mainstream media was totally unaware of the dire straits both the EDL and the BNP were in prior to Rigby's murder.

Although BNP branches did report a momentary spike of re-interest, they felt hampered by a dire shortage of materials and funds. Throughout the party there was a growing sense of hopelessness. Griffin and the party were "like rabbits stuck in headlights. Nobody knew what to do, but we were told to do something, anything, but what?" one BNP officer told us. Griffin announced that the BNP would march through Woolwich and further panic broke out around the country.

So bad were things in the BNP that only one branch took the opportunity to download a leaflet available on its website to be distributed the weekend immediately after the murder.



(far-left) Police said 1500 marched in Newcastle, the EDL claimed it was 7000

(left) The BNP's London demonstration. Even a step ladder couldn't give them a lift

March

As Lennon and 1,500 other EDL supporters marched into Newcastle city centre on 25 May, even the BNP's national organiser Adam Walker, normally immobile, trailed behind him. The BNP released Griffin's video address, recorded in Strasbourg, announcing the BNP were to march in Woolwich hoping for a spike in media interest.

Another 1,200 EDL supporters crammed into Whitehall on the bank holiday Monday. Lennon and Carroll, like ringmasters, conducted a chorus of anti-Islam abuse as the world's media reported back on the rise of the EDL, and a growing number of incidents involving attacks on Mosques and individuals across Britain. By contrast, the media were portraying the BNP as irrelevant parasites, worrying party insiders that they had been squeezed out of the frame by their own cumbersome behaviour. The reality was, it was only the EDL that the mainstream media had not noticed in decline.

The remainder of the week for the BNP was a PR nightmare. Few had bothered to respond to the BNP promise of a march from Woolwich to Lewisham. Inside the BNP, local members were horrified by the prospect of a march through multicultural South London to the area where the far-right suffered one of its greatest ever humiliations, Lewisham, in 1977.

While Griffin threw the march open as an "all welcome" peaceful procession, behind the scenes interest in the march began to waver and there were fewer membership renewals than the party had hoped for. The threat of a three-line whip and pressure put on to recruit local EDL and Infidels' to the march also fell flat. Worse was to come when Lennon announced that they would lay wreaths across the country on the day that the BNP planned their Woolwich march.

The party's press officer, Simon Darby, was pressed into ringing around contacts in the media to try to drum up air time for Griffin, but as one producer told us, Darby was made to pay for his "persistent arrogance" in the past and ignored or palmed off. Griffin was put on a number of standby lists for comment but was not used. In London in particular, the BNP were seen by the media as "irrelevant". He was even dumped by Newsnight to make way for Lennon, himself dumped at the last moment.

Soon, the word in the BNP was to ignore anything in the media, and to ensure people still organised themselves to be in London on 1 June. Griffin was desperately back peddling in private at least, to get out of his Woolwich promise.

Desperate ploy

On Thursday the BNP's march was banned. The now reduced six-mile

"death march" was deemed unsafe by the Metropolitan Police, less than two hours after Griffin took over negotiations with them himself. Then another PR stunt went horribly wrong. Griffin decided to threaten the Metropolitan Police that he would be turning up in Woolwich anyway, and called upon Lennon to join him (once he'd thrown off the shackles of his "Zionist advisors") in Woolwich so they could get "nicked" together.

Griffin felt that throwing down a challenge to Lennon would humiliate the EDL leader. As Lennon laughed off the BNP leader's desperate ploy, one BNP full-timer sent an email to his closest friend's deriding Griffin for his "desperation" declaring he would rather go fishing "then get my head kicked in down in that shit hole" of London.

133 BNP activists and supporters made it to London. Bruised and beaten, they shuffled around for three hours without a march of any kind, before being sent packing to a dingy pub in Sydenham, South London, for a buffet that ran dry minutes after Griffin's arrival there.

For the EDL, there was more havoc and violence as more than 60 wreath layings around the country descended into drunken brawls and confrontations, with nearly 1,500 people active.

Woolwich regalvanised Lennon and brought thousands of new supporters into the EDL. He has been given huge media coverage and he is once again the undisputed leader. What long-term impact this will have remains to be seen. The images of balaclava-wearing EDL thugs throwing bottles at the police on the night of Lee Rigby's murder horrified many and while they received a huge boost in support on Facebook the organisation is still only appealing to a thuggish minority. As the memory of Woolwich dies down, the EDL will return to pointless demonstrations with little or no political objective.

For the BNP, though, Woolwich has simply confirmed their increasing political irrelevancy and one, surely, that will culminate in Griffin losing his seat at next year's European Elections.

To ban or not to ban?

Last month HOPE not hate led the calls for anti-Muslim activists Pam Geller and Robert Spencer to be banned from entering the UK to address an EDL rally. More than 27,000 people signed our petition and the Home Secretary stopped them coming in.

Our campaign raised passions on all sides. Here are two different views:



IMRAN AWAN

THE BRITISH Home Secretary, Theresa May, made the right decision last month in banning the two prominent US anti-Islamic activists, Pamela Gellar and Robert Spencer, from entering the UK. The English Defence League (EDL) had invited them to speak at a rally to mark Armed Forces Day in Woolwich on 29 June, in a memorial to Lee Rigby.

In a joint statement published on their respective websites 'Jihad Watch' and the 'Atlas Shrugs' blog, they wrote: 'In a striking blow against freedom the British Government has banned us from entering the country ... the nation that gave us the Magna Carta is dead.'

Indeed Geller also took to Twitter to tell her 33,941 followers that: "Banned in UK for opposing violence, for advocating individual rights, for opposing oppression, genocide ... jihad and sharia." There are numerous reasons why banning Geller and Spencer was the

Anti-Islamic hate should be banned

correct decision. Geller and Spencer's controversial stance on Islam sits uncomfortably with those of us who promote and understand that Islam is a religion of peace and not hate.

They are co-founders of the American Freedom Defence initiative. Geller's rise to notoriety came when she conducted a New York poster campaign which critics argued described Muslims as 'savages'. The idea of these posters in subways in New York was provocative, inflammatory and risked igniting hatred and whipping up a sense of fear and Islamophobia.

In a recent anti-Muslim protest in Tennessee, an animated Geller told protestors: "And I will tell you that freedom of speech is a line in the sand because, without freedom of speech peaceful men must resort to violence ... and we don't want to!" Interestingly, it's not those comments the Home Secretary used to refuse her entry to the UK. On her blog page, Geller posted a copy of the Home Office letter of refusal, which states: You are reported to have said the following: 'Al-Qaeda is a manifestation of devout Islam...it is Islam.'

And this is the real problem for far right activists like Geller and Spencer who don't get the true picture of Islam. Their misinterpretation of the word jihad is both alarming and worrying. For example, Spencer's blog entitled 'Blogging the Quran'

does nothing but add more heat than light. What he fails to understand is that word Jihad itself comes from the Arabic root term Jahada meaning 'strive and struggle.' Islam refers to this 'striving and struggling' as a metaphor to be a good citizen.

Incite hatred

Their speeches and blogs only play into the hands of far rights groups such as the EDL. As Keith Vaz, chairman of the Home Affairs Select Committee, argues: "It is clear the location, motivation and attendees at this march will incite hatred."

My research into counter terrorism issues has shown that there is a fine line between a person's right to free speech and inciting harm and hatred, which Geller and Spencer clearly are doing.

They now join a long list of people banned in the UK such as far right activists and hate preachers like the American Baptist pastor Fred Waldrone Phelps Snr, Omar Bakri, Nasr Javed, and Sami Al Qutar to name but a few. Don't forget if the UK had allowed preachers like the hardline Christian pastor Terry Jones a platform it would have caused irreversible damage to community relations. He also was invited to talk at an EDL rally.

The decision to ban Geller and Spencer should be welcomed as there is a real sense of anxiety that their presence in the UK would be counterproductive.

Their hosts for the rally the EDL posted an article on their website entitled 'Beneath Contempt' arguing that "Pamela and Robert believe as we do, that the likes of Mr Vaz are wrong about Islamic extremism ... they don't like to argue about Islamic extremism and how best to defeat it."

Maybe that's where we should start by having a debate about all forms of extremism. The tragic death of Lee Rigby should not be used by the far right or anyone else hoping to capitalise on this incident. Evidence from Tell MAMA (Measuring anti-Muslim Attacks) clearly shows that Muslims across the UK are becoming victims of violence since Woolwich. As mosques are petrol bombed, graffiti is scrawled against mosque walls and women's head scarves are being pulled off, Geller and Spencer's presence in the UK would only have stirred up more hatred, religious intolerance and animosity.

Perhaps the Home Secretary should now take another bold and brave decision by banning groups like the EDL whose abhorrent and incendiary views are not helping improve community relations and instead risk stoking up hatred and perpetuating Islamophobia.

● *Imran Awan is Senior Lecturer in Criminology at Birmingham City University*



Don't turn Pamela Geller and Robert Spencer into free speech martyrs



JAMES BLOODWORTH

THE ANTI-FASCIST campaign group Hope Not Hate (HNH) successfully wrote to the Home Secretary Theresa May urging her to stop Pamela Geller and Robert Spencer from entering the UK to speak at an English Defence League rally in June.

Largely unknown in Britain, Geller and Spencer have carved out a reputation in the US as vehement anti-Muslim campaigners. They head up an organisation called Stop the Islamization of America, best known for its opposition to a proposed mosque near Ground Zero.

They are not, however, in the sense of Richard Dawkins or the late Christopher Hitchens, anti-religion – they are anti-Muslim. To cite just one example of their

prejudice, Spencer does not believe a distinction should be drawn between violent jihadists and the majority of peaceful Muslims:

"There is no distinction in the American Muslim community between peaceful Muslims and jihadists. While Americans prefer to imagine that the vast majority of American Muslims are civic-minded patriots who accept wholeheartedly the parameters of American pluralism, this proposition has actually never been proven."

As for Geller, she claims Barack Obama secretly revealed to the Egyptian foreign minister that he is a Muslim. In the same article, Geller stated: "This is devastating news, and yet no media is covering it. A stealth jihad on the White House ... this is akin to an SS officer getting elected president during WW II".

Geller is also a prominent genocide denier. As One Law for All put it in their brilliant report on the far-right, *Enemies not Allies*: "Geller has defended Radovan Karadzic, and likened his war crimes trial at The Hague to a 'Sharia court'. She has also asserted that Bosnian Muslims killed themselves during the conflict in question in order to 'manipulate media coverage'.

Further, Geller has published and endorsed articles by Julia Gorin, which in their criticism of Karadzic's trial refer to the '8,000' Muslims supposedly executed by Serbian forces' [sic], and place scare quotes around the word 'genocide' when discussing Srebrenica."

You perhaps have an idea of why the English Defence League might like them.

Mature nation

Banning them from entering Britain, however, would be counterproductive. These people already self-pityingly style themselves as a silent majority whose opinions are repressed by the state. Every time one of their number talks you can set your watch because it is a certainty that at some point they will claim they are "not allowed to talk about Islam/Muslims/immigrations etc".

Do we really want to provide them with such easy ammunition to throw back at us?

No, Britain is a sufficiently mature nation to reject the extremism of people like Geller and Spencer. There has been no 'wave' of anti-Muslim bigotry on the back of the Woolwich

killing of Drummer Lee Rigby. Those incidents that have occurred appear mostly to have involved those, like the EDL, who were simply waiting for an excuse to legitimise their bigotry.

In the age of the internet preventing people like Geller and Spencer from speaking at a rally is actually fairly inconsequential – their videos can be found all over YouTube.

To put it in free speech terms, other people should also be free to hear what Spencer and Geller have to say just as those of us reading this article are – and free to reject their twisted reasoning, if you can call it that.

Banning them for what they might say is also dangerous territory. Free speech within the law should be paramount. If they break British law then they should be asked to leave.

The worst thing to do would be to allow them to portray themselves as free speech martyrs. As Nick Cohen recently phrased it, if you can't defeat idiots like this with rational argument move out of the way and let people who can.

● **James Bloodworth is the editor of Left Foot Forward**

Putting extremists in the spotlight

Sunder Katwala on how the challenges the British media face in reporting extremism

THE MURDER of soldier Lee Rigby and its aftermath exemplified several difficult challenges for media outlets when reporting on extremism. Extreme events put extremists in the spotlight. This threw up important editorial choices – about how to cover the murder itself, the attempts by extremists to exploit them, and hate crimes in the wake of them.

The first was how to cover this grisly, highly newsworthy crime. Those involved allegedly intended to send a message. They grabbed passers-by with mobile phones rather than trying to flee the scene. Some newspapers came uncomfortably close to producing poster front-pages which the alleged perpetrators might have designed for themselves. The *Guardian's* liberal tradition of self-critical scrutiny was shown by its accepting that charge against its headline “You people will never be safe” over three-quarters of the front-page of the man with bloodied hands. “The message was unmediated”, wrote readers’ editor Chris Elliott.

This question of mediation arose too as both Islamist extremists and the far right sought to use Woolwich to boost their profile, ideally seeking to turn their warnings and threats of a spiral of violence into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Anjem Choudary, of the banned hate group al-Maharajoun, and an associate of one of the suspects charged with the crime, went from studio to studio. “Just interviewed Anjem Choudary on *Daybreak*. He said the murder of Lee Rigby was justified. What a disgusting and offensive view”, tweeted presenter Jonathan Swain. That was, surely, precisely what they had invited him on to say.

The far right BNP and EDL hoped to exploit Woolwich too. When an Islamic centre in Muswell Hill was destroyed by fire, with EDL graffiti at the scene, *Daybreak* staff announced they had arranged an interview with EDL leader Stephen Yaxley-Lennon, under his alias Tommy Robinson. It was later cancelled, citing legal concerns. If the EDL leader would not have been invited without a building being burnt down, that could have been a dangerous precedent to set.



(left) Stephen Lennon, (right) Anjem Choudary



Extremist voices

A Today programme interview with Robinson was criticised as being rather soft, in taking professions of commitments to non-violence at face value. A *Daily Politics* interview with Andrew Neil was more robust, asking the EDL leader how many violent convictions he had, and was preceded by a film putting the debate about the nature of the EDL in context. Neil reported receiving abuse and threats from EDL supporters.

These are tricky issues. It is rightly argued that any ban would be both illiberal and counterproductive, but there has been too little engagement with the choices broadcasters make, and why. The acting head of BBC news Fran Unsworth airily dismissed concerns about platforming Choudary, saying “I suspect that there aren’t a lot of jihadists watching *Newsnight*”. This misses the point. The damage of Choudary’s media megaphone – out of all kilter to the couple of dozen supporters he draws on for protests – is that audiences who might have little understanding of Islamist politics or the balance of British Muslim opinion may take this most fringe of extreme voices to be broadly representative. Similarly, it is often forgotten that most people have not heard of the EDL. About

four in ten have done so, according to YouGov polling reported by the Extremis project.

If the media is going to platform extremists, it needs to offer its audiences proper context too.

“It’s important for people to understand what we’re up against” was a better argument from the BBC’s Fran Unsworth, but that requires investigative reporting and scrutiny. That was missing from some of the chats with extremists on breakfast TV and radio.

Perhaps there is a good argument for more scrutiny and coverage in reported and investigative packages, but a higher threshold for prestige studio interviews.

The post-Woolwich coverage gave the impression that much, and perhaps too much, appears to be left to editorial hunches. But the traditional media have now lost their monopoly on interrogation – as online and social media scrutiny of each of these choices showed. Should senior broadcast voices find an appropriate forum to publicly engage – and to articulate the principles which underpin choices about when and how to platform the most extreme voices, and when not to do so, and why?

■ Sunder Katwala is director of the think-tank British Future

Importing the sectarianism that drives Syrian conflict

by Fiyaz Mughal

Saudi Imam
Mohammed
Al-Arif

TELL MAMA was contacted in mid-June by a member of the British Shia Muslim community to tell them that a Saudi Imam called Mohammed Al-Arif had recently arrived in the UK to undertake a series of meetings and sermons to British Muslims.

What we started to hear was shocking and it led us to a world of sectarianism that is at the heart of so much trouble in the Middle East.

Al-Arif, a fiery and influential Saudi religious scholar and professor at King Saud University, is reported to have defended Bin Laden on Al-Jazeera earlier this year.

According to Al-Arabiya News in February he allegedly claimed that Al-Qaeda "does not tolerate bloodshed" and went onto suggest it was the victim of poor public relations because it had become associated with being a 'bad ideology'.

We then discovered that in May he was banned from entering Switzerland and all European Union countries, but because the UK had opted out of the Schengen agreement this exclusion did not cover the United Kingdom.

The Arab News article also cited Al-Arif as having said that a "daughter should not sit alone with her father because she might tempt him into lust after her."

So the trail of information about this Saudi national started to unravel. We then conducted a professional translation of three examples of his sectarianism, the first from a sermon given in Saudi Arabia in 2010 which has been watched on YouTube

more than 30,000 times.

"Those who knelt before Ali – these Shia – have raised themselves above all human beings and stand in the way of Sunni and unity. They try to stand in the way of the Sunni people. We do not forget what the Shia have done throughout history...they plant seed for disunity.....they have co-operated with forces of corruption and destruction, for example in this land (Saudi Arabia) and in Iran."

Al Arifi continued:

"Look at what happens to our Sunni brothers in Iraq and Iran at the hands of these Shia who are corrupting them.....They (the Shia), commit the worst crimes and do not even relieve children of their cruelty. They boil children in water and they beat them. This happens to seven or ten year olds. And it does not stop there. They destroyed Islam and Sunni's throughout history."

Anyone reading the previous statement cannot help but reflect that the statements are very similar to the blood-libel that has been targeted for millennia against Jewish communities. The only difference here was that it was being targeted against other Muslims by a well-known Muslim preacher in Saudi Arabia, knowing full well that the Eastern peninsular of Saudi Arabia is made up of Shia communities many of whom are second class citizens in their own country.

Righteous cause

The sermon goes onto state that the Shia are infidels and he rails against Iran for allegedly attempting



to influence the Yemeni Government against Saudi Arabia.

He even gives a 'general command' to Sunnis on the south of the Arabian peninsula to fight the Shia Houthis and regards those who do as Mujahideen or holy warriors.

The second link provided was a Friday sermon from the Amr Ibn Al-Asas Mosque in Cairo. It took place on 14 June, shortly before Al-Arif landed in the UK. He describes Damascus as a key city within Islamic history and refers to the religious reverence for Christians. Due to the importance for Islam and Christianity, he suggests that Syria must be protected at all costs.

He then sets the scene as one which is Shia against Sunni.

"In Syria [the Shia opposition] kill their children and violate their women and kill their men and nobody stops them except the brave men that fight for the righteous cause of protecting their people."

He goes on: "Syrians, God will reward you with victory in your lands.....These Shia are killing their own sons and shaming their women. They

are corrupted."

This is followed by another clear reference to Shia being perpetrators of crimes against humanity.

TELL MAMA wrote to the Home Office and passed these details on in the third week of June. It is clear that Al-Arif is someone who preaches sectarianism and has been clearly influenced by the Syrian civil war. The latter is not the issue, the former is, especially when he comes to the UK to meet with British Muslim organisations.

While we do not suggest that he may have preached such sectarianism in the UK, (we simply do not know), allowing such an individual into the UK runs the risk of irritating good community relations between Sunni and Shia communities.

This is even more acute given that Anjem Choudhary and his motley crew attacked a young Shia man on the streets of Edgware Road in May.

The last thing we need is to import sectarianism into our country. It has been suggested that Al-Arif will be coming back to the UK again. This time we hope that the Home Office bars his entry as it did Pamela Geller and Robert Spencer.

■ Fiyaz Mughal is director of Faith Matters and the anti-Muslim hatred monitoring unit, TELL MAMA.

REPORTING ISLAMOPHOBIA

Key

Marches and rallies

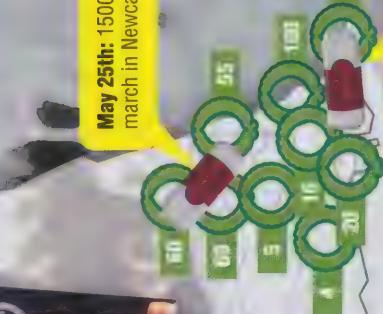
Attacks on Mosques and individuals
(plus approx. numbers taking part)

Wreath laying

Reports of Islamophobic crimes following
the murder of Lee Rigby

1. May 22: Man charged with possession of offensive
weapons after smoke bomb attack on Mosque in Braintree,
Essex.

2. May 22: Man charged with religiously aggravated criminal
damage after attack on Mosque in Gillinham, Kent



>>ON TOUR<<
ACAB-FTS,
NFSE-5STQ

1. May 22: 11 arrested
2. May 23rd: 11 arrested
3. May 23rd: disturbances

22nd May: 20 EDL demonstrate in Middlesbrough on their way to Newcastle.

22nd June: 150 join coalition of former EDL supporters for march in Burnley

damage after attack on Mosque in Gillingham, Kent

3. **May 22:** Bacon and pork left outside Mosque in Cardiff. reading "Terrorist training camp".

4. **May 23:** Maidenhead Mosque vandalised.

5. **May 23:** Mosque in Bolton has graffiti scrawled on it reading "Muslim centre in Milton Keynes set alight while thirty people were inside".

6. **May 23:** Pool, Four men charged after attack on Dorset's Cultural Islamic Centre.

7. **May 23:** Islamic centre in Milton Keynes set alight while thirty people were inside.

8. **May 23:** Folkestone Mosque attacked and worshippers verbally abused.

9. **May 23:** 11 arrested after disturbances outside of a Mosque in Grimsby.

10. **May 23:** Paint thrown at Belfast Islamic Centre.

11. **May 24:** "Muslim Scum" daubed on Bournemouth's Islamic Centre & Central Mosque.

12. **May 24:** Woman arrested for abusing worshippers outside Gillingham Mosque.

13. **May 25:** Four people arrested after protest outside Portsmouth Mosque.

14. **May 26:** Despite police guard, three petrol bombs thrown at Grimsby Mosque.

15. **May 27:** Brick thrown through window at Brixton Mosque.

16. **May 30:** Window smashed at Huntingdon Islamic Education & Prayer Centre.

17. **May 31:** Racist graffiti on the Muslim prayer hall in Balckburn.

18. **June 5:** Arson attack destroys Islamic centre in North London.

19. **June 6:** Muslim woman's home attacked in East Grinstead.

20. **June 9:** Islamic boarding school attacked by arsonists in Chiselshurst while 128 students and staff were inside.

21. **June 10:** Bacon posted through the letter box and graffiti sprayed on wall of Mosque in Maidenhurst.

22. **June 10:** EDL graffiti at Mosque in Oadby, Leicestershire.

23. **June 16:** Broadcaster Andrew Neil receives death threats after taking on EDL leader Stephen Lennon on his "Politics" show.

24. **June 18:** man charged with conspiracy to commit arson after attack on Muslim premises in Gloucester

25. **June 20:** EDL member John Parkin given indefinite CRASBO and jailed for 18 months having been convicted of religiously aggravated disorderly behaviour after threatening to burn down a mosque in Rhyl, North Wales.

26. **June 22:** Home-made explosive device left outside mosque in Walsall.

27. **June 26:** Redditch Central Mosque daubed with "EDL and NF graffiti".

28. **June 29:** Muslim graves painted with swastikas in Newport cemetery.

29. **June 29:** EDL leaders arrested close to East London Mosque, seen of earlier EDL protests in the past.



Blinded to extremism

Nick Lowles on the failure of the left to criticise some forms of hatred

Last month six men were sentenced to more than 100 years in prison for planning to attack an English Defence League demonstration in Dewsbury last year with a homemade bomb, guns and knives.

The court heard how the men, all from Birmingham, only abandoned their plan after they arrived in Dewsbury two hours after the demonstration had finished. They were caught by chance after one of the two cars they were travelling in was stopped and impounded after being found to have no insurance.

Amongst their possessions were copies of a letter they had written to the Queen and David Cameron explaining their actions. It stated: "We love death more than you love life ... What we did today was a direct retaliation of your insulting of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him) & also in retaliation of your crusade against Islam/ Muslims on a global scale. It is of the greatest honour for us to do what we did."

I wrote a blog condemning their actions and unequivocally called them terrorists. I also feared they would have unleashed violent retribution on the British Muslim community if they had been successful.

The blog was instantly attacked by some on the political left.

Sita Balani wrote a piece entitled: "Beyond 'A Plague on both their houses': The Bradford 12 and the liberal anti-fascism of HOPE not hate" in which she compared the six Dewsbury plotters with the 12 men in Bradford who, in 1981, were

accused of preparing petrol bombs ahead of a National Front march through their neighbourhood.

While accepting that there were some – though unmentioned – differences between the two cases, Sita saw many similarities. "Both groups saw their targets as lying beyond the Far Right's street level boot boys," she wrote. "Found alongside the weapons, in the car on its way to Dewsbury, was a letter damning the EDL, David Cameron and the Queen: a triumvirate we might consider to represent popular racism, neo-liberalism and neo-colonial wars, and British imperialism. The Bradford 12, though secular in their critique, also acted against institutional racism as well as to the racist violence, which one of the 12 described as 'a way of life' that went unchallenged by the police, the courts and the government."

'Cry of rage'

The other attack came from Judith Orr, the editor of *Socialist Worker*, and the organ of the Socialist Workers' Party. She described my blog as "despicable" and criticised me for demonising the six men as terrorists.

The headline of Orr's article gave a clear indication of the approach she was taking: "We need more than brave individuals to beat the Nazis".

"The men who went to Dewsbury with homemade bombs were a reaction to bigotry, not its cause," she wrote. "The violence of an oppressor cannot be equated with the actions of those suffering oppression who lash out to fight back."

To Orr, as the headline suggested, thought these men were simply wrong in their actions. "In reality individual acts of terror may represent a cry of rage but they do not take the struggle forward.

"They can actually damage the chances of building the sort of struggles needed to win, sapping confidence of ordinary people and allowing the state to increase repression.

"If you assassinate a Tory, blow up a banker or shoot a fascist it can cause a temporary crisis.

"But each will be replaced and the system remains intact."

I will come back to these criticisms of my condemnation of the Dewsbury bombers, but it is worth reflecting on a wider problem which is that many on the Left ignore extremism and hatred when it is not perpetrated by white racists. This at best undermines the moral case against right-wing extremism and at worst leaves a vacuum for racists and Islamophobes to exploit by presenting themselves as the defenders of minority rights.

Why is there no condemnation when a Muslim cleric calls for gay people to be killed or espouses holocaust denial? How can we sit by in silence when a death sentence is put on a person who decides that he or she no longer wants to be a Muslim?

Where is our support for women's rights, gay rights or human rights?

Earlier this year the communications watchdog, Ofcom, made a series of rulings against Islamic channels which had allowed

"inflammatory" material to be broadcast in breach of rules which forbid extreme opinions gaining a platform on British television.

Among the examples found was an Islamic scholar who told viewers: "It is your duty ... to kill those who insult Prophet Mohammed." Then there was a preacher banned from coming to Britain who used the channel – which he co-owns – to say anyone who left Islam should be put to death and a phone-in presenter who advocated "eliminating" anyone who disrespected Mohammed.

In December a Leeds radio station, Radio Asian Fever, was fined £4,000 for breaching broadcasting rules in programmes involving a presenter called "Sister Ruby Ramadan". She told listeners that homosexuals should be beaten and tortured.

None of these incidents were criticised by the left-wing organisations and institutions which claim to campaign against racism.

Oppressor v Oppressed

There are three common arguments used to explain a failure to criticise non-white extremists. The first is the need to understand the racial power politics of British society and capitalism and the right of the oppressed to fight back against the oppressor.

In a follow-up article, published after the six men were convicted, *Socialist Worker* wrote: "Some have said that the actions of the Dewsbury men are equivalent to the violence of the fascists.

"This argument says that there are extremists on both sides and that socialists should oppose both equally.



The political ideology which led Mohamed Merah to shoot Jewish school children is ignored by those who sought to explain his actions

"But this ignores racism and oppression.

"The plan to attack the EDL was a reaction to discrimination. It is not equal to the violence of the state, or of racists or fascists who attack people because of their race or religion. It was an act of despair against racist thugs."

While of course it is important to recognise the racism minority communities suffer in the UK this should not give them a free pass to hate and commit violence against others.

Another argument used is that by criticising non-white extremists, particularly Islamic extremists, we are playing into the hands of Islamophobes.

While of course one has to be careful not to give ammunition to those who stoke up anti-Muslim hatred for religious or racial reasons, this should not be an excuse to ignore some forms of hatred. In fact, it is our failure to speak out and condemn which leaves the vacuum for the white racists to exploit.

And how can we expect ordinary Muslims to speak out and oppose extremism and hatred in their own community when anti-racists and anti-fascists refuse to do it themselves?

Finally, there is also the argument that these extreme Islamist groups are small and not representative of the wider Muslim communities and so it is inappropriate to

give them too much attention.

This might be a legitimate argument if it were not that some of the groups who argue this then protest and oppose even smaller and more irrelevant groups on the far right.

The size of the group should also not be the determining factor. The National Front number less than 100 activists but that does not stop the some calling protests every time they do something publicly.

Anjem Choudary's group might only number a few hundred strong but he is highly significant. He garners much media attention and there have been several dozen people convicted of terrorism who have been linked to him.

Foreign policy

The failure of some of the left to criticise the Dewsbury bombers is just the latest example of an inability to criticise Islamic extremists. Lindsey German, from the Stop the War Coalition, claimed that Mohamed Merah, who killed seven people in Toulouse in March 2012, was "the terrible and disastrous outcome of the West's war policies and anti-Muslim racism."

Not a word about the extreme Islamist ideology which turned resentment into murderous action. Not a word about how his visits to Al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan

and Pakistan might have influenced his mindset. More importantly, German offered no explanation of why, if Mohamed Merah was fuelled by the West's oppression in Iraq and Afghanistan, he decided to shoot Jewish schoolchildren.

Trying to determine who is the oppressor and who is the oppressed is not as clear cut as some would have us believe. If a Muslim is driven to acts of violence because of oppression and racism then what of the oppression of those he or she targets?

What about the rights of women, gay people, Jews and even those who have turned away from Islam? Surely, just because someone is a victim of racism and oppression they do not have the right to oppress, target and potentially kill others.

And who decides who is the oppressed and the oppressor?

Likewise, with Woolwich, some groups on the left paid pitiful lip service to the dead soldier or the extremist ideology which appears to have motivated them.

Contrast that with David Copeland, the London nailbomber, who killed three people and injured 200 others in 1999. The people who now ignore the political ideology of the Dewsbury Six, the Toulouse killer or the Woolwich murderers were quick to label Copeland as simply a 'fascist'. No need to explain or understand his actions. The same with Anders Breivik.

Sita Balani compares the Dewsbury Six to the Bradford 12. Judith Orr calls them "brave" but misguided.

Both are totally and completely wrong. The Bradford 12 were young secular Asians defending their own community against a provocative fascist march. It was a defensive action designed to stop a fascist incursion. The Dewsbury Six was about people driven by an extremist Islamist ideology who were prepared to go and kill for their beliefs.

Three of the six had read

the terrorist online magazine *Inspire*, which is connected to Anwar al-Awlaki, the former spiritual leader of al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula.

One of them, Jewel Uddin, had a recording of a lecture on his mobile phone, in which the speaker said that it was right to wage war against the unbeliever. He had collected components for a pipe bomb after reading instructions in *Inspire*.

At the home of another, police found 859 examples of extremist literature, including some urging people to fight abroad.

A third had already served a prison sentence after being convicted of possession of terrorist material from the internet. A fourth is the brother of Ishaaq Hussain, who was sentenced to 40 months imprisonment in April for his part in a bomb plot that police considered to be more deadly than 7/7.

These are not brave men driven to violence by racism. These are extremists who sought to carry out terrorism for an ideology that all progressive people should oppose.

Hate is hate, pure and simple. Whether it is the BNP blaming all immigrants for the ills of society or a Muslim cleric calling homosexuality a crime punishable by death, hate is wrong and it should be opposed.

How can we say we defend women's rights when we ignore those who want to subjugate women? How can we say we defend gay rights when we fail to speak out against those who call homosexuality a crime punishable by death? How can we say we believe in freedom when we deliberately ignore those who call for people who have renounced their religion to be hunted down and killed?

Turning a blind eye to some forms of hatred or excusing it because it does not fit our world view is deplorable. Worse still, by remaining silent we are letting down the victims of this hatred.

TOGETHER

Nick Lowles looks at the changing political landscape and calls for a more community-focused and positive response

HANNAH WANTED SOME HELP. She wanted some help, some advice and perhaps someone just to talk to. She was frustrated, bordering on desperation.

Hannah was from Lincolnshire and contacted the HOPE not hate office shortly after the UKIP won 17 seats in May's county council elections. It was not just that UKIP were now the official opposition on the council that persuaded Hannah to get in contact, but more the general increase in racism that had accompanied their success.

She felt that racism was on the increase and given legitimacy by UKIP's success. What worried her most was the open and casual racism expressed by people living around her, particularly young people. And she should know. She is a school teacher with a teenage daughter.

Hannah wanted help. She wanted to speak to others who felt the same but perhaps like her didn't have the confidence to speak out openly. Hannah wanted to know what to do.

* * *

Offering a response to people like Hannah has occupied much of our time in recent months.

The electoral collapse of the British National Party (BNP) has been accompanied by the rapid rise of the UK Independence Party (UKIP) and its adoption of an increasingly anti-immigrant message.

UKIP entered 2013 with just 40 borough and county councillors, 20,000 members and polling at just 5% in most opinion polls. It was, above all, known almost exclusively for its opposition to Britain's membership of the European Union.



Six months later, all this has changed. UKIP now has 216 councillors, 30,000 members and is polling at between 12% and 18% in opinion polls. More importantly for HOPE not hate, it is focusing far more on immigration than Europe and has been adopting an increasingly anti-immigrant tone.

With this unlikely to change over the next 12 months, as Bulgarians and Romanians are allowed to work in the UK and with the European Elections next May, this has thrown up huge questions for HOPE not hate. Is our electoral job done or should we be refocusing on

UKIP? And, if we do, then why and how do we do it?

This is the question we have put to our supporters over the last four months in what has been our largest ever consultation. More than 3,500 people replied to the two surveys we circulated, and recently more than 1,200 people have attended over 60 HOPE not hate meetings across the country. Some have been small conversations with a few people but others, such as Leicester, have been much larger with more than 70 present.

Continued on page 30

HOPE not hate factsheet

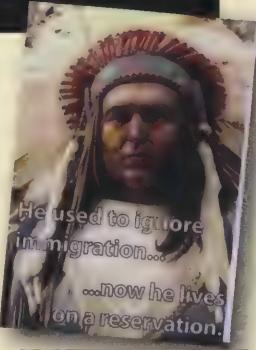
Understanding UKIP

UKIP is a xenophobic party rather than a traditional far right racist party. It combines the English nationalism of Enoch Powell with the populist anti-immigrant and Eurosceptic parties of northern and western Europe, such as the True Finns and Geert Wilders' Freedom Party.

UKIP is not a fascist party nor is it a racist party like the BNP. For the hardcore of BNP members (and 31% of their voters in the 2009 European elections), their racism stemmed from a belief that non-whites were genetically inferior to white Britons. While 17% of UKIP voters had this view, 58% did not.

Similarly, while 44% of BNP voters disagreed with the notion that "non-white British citizens who were born in this country are just as 'British' as white citizens born in this country", only 18% of UKIP voters felt the same, compared to 64% who agreed.

UKIP on race and immigration



UKIP is increasingly focusing on immigration and the failure of multiculturalism. Much of their material has focused on potential arrivals of Bulgarians and Romanians into the UK in January 2014, with some of their leaflets claiming that 29m people could arrive into Britain. Other UKIP leaflets have focused more generally on immigration and multiculturalism.

One UKIP leaflet even carried a picture of a Native American Indian, with the words: "He used to ignore immigration ... now he lives on a reservation."

- 87% of UKIP voters in the 2009 European Elections believe that "all further immigration to the UK should be halted".
- A 2012 YouGov poll of 1505 UKIP supporters, found:
 - 51% do NOT believe that Britain has benefited from immigration (compared to 25% who do)
 - 35% think immigrants should be sent back to their 'home' country
 - 51% believe that immigrants are the main source of crime (21% disagree)
- Immigration is the most important issue for UKIP supporters. Europe as an issue comes second or even third.
- 63% of UKIP voters believe that white people suffer "unfair discrimination", only 8% think Muslim do. Conversely, 61% of UKIP voters think Muslims "benefit from UNFAIR ADVANTAGES in Britain", compared to just 5% who believe that white people do.



(left) Enoch Powell, (right) Geert Wilders'

UKIP and Islam

UKIP is strongly opposed to what they perceive as the "Islamic threat" and the party has been closely linked to leading figures in the 'counter-Jihad' movement. UKIP brought Dutch politician Geert Wilders to the UK to screen his anti-Islam film Fitna. Gerald Batten MEP has spoken at international 'counter-jihad' conferences and is linked to leading anti-Muslim activists like Sam Solomon and Paul Diamond.



Gerald Batten MEP

According to a 2012 YouGov poll:

- 82% are bothered by construction of a mosque in their neighbourhood (2.1% would welcome it)
- 85% believe that Islam poses a threat to Western civilisation (7.6% disagree)
- 75% believe violence between racial/ethnic/religious groups is inevitable (11.6% disagree)

Why people support UKIP?

Support for UKIP is not policy driven but it is more of a 'mood' – a sense of unease about the state of the country, where the country is going and a disdain for the political establishment. This allows UKIP to be all things to all people and present a different image in the more affluent south to the working class north.

It also means that simply offering policy alternatives on immigration/welfare etc is unlikely to win back many UKIP voters.



Photo: Jennifer Jane Mills

Whatever the size, the discussion has largely been the same. At these meetings we have given our supporters four options.

1. We should ignore UKIP. They are not a fascist party and so are outside the remit of what HOPE not hate was set up to oppose.
2. We highlight, expose and even campaign against racism and racists within UKIP but not against the party itself.
3. We campaign head on against UKIP, but perhaps in a slightly different way to how we would campaign against the BNP.
4. We challenge UKIP culturally rather than politically. UKIP simply reflect the 20% of society that opposes all immigration and a multicultural society. Rather than campaigning directly against UKIP we simply promote our vision of modern Britain and challenge the racism, prejudice and misconceptions held by people who might support UKIP.

The meetings provoked discussion, debate and even argument. There was a wide-range of opinions, some believing UKIP was simply the BNP in suits to others who believed they were not our business.

A few meetings were attended by the odd UKIP supporter and a couple of meetings which EDL thugs tried to disrupt. In Southampton, one man was arrested after launching an anti-immigrant tirade, while in Dudley three EDL supporters obviously got so bored that the discussion was about UKIP and not the EDL that they stood up and sang the national anthem before walking out.

Ultimately, there was a general consensus to the meetings which

mirrored the view of those who completed our online surveys. Most believed we should expose the racist and anti-immigrant campaigns and the racist individuals within UKIP but not necessarily campaign against the party as a whole. People also understood that UKIP tapped into cultural unease about immigration and that it was important to challenge this by debunking myths and offering a more positive alternative vision of society.

So, a combination of options 2 and 4.

As our UKIP factfile graphically shows, for many UKIP voters immigration is much more of a concern than Europe. It is also clear that the majority of UKIP voters are not just uneasy with current or future immigration as a consequence with membership of the European Union, but immigration per se. The majority view past immigration as harmful to the UK and are hostile to the very concept of multiculturalism.

In many ways UKIP is tapping into the vein once mined so successfully by Enoch Powell. It contains an English nationalist outlook, is against non-white immigration, is hostile to the European Union and has a deep distrust and dislike of the political establishment.

Unsurprisingly, in a poll commissioned by Lord Ashcroft in April, 90% of UKIP voters had heard of Enoch Powell and what he was known for – almost twice the national average.

Research has revealed that support for UKIP is not policy driven but is more of a 'mood' – a sense of unease about the state of the country, where it is going and a disdain for the political establishment.

If UKIP speak to the 20% of Britons who are hostile to immigration and multiculturalism then we need to

speak up for the 25% who are content. And in the process we need to try to win over the remaining half by offering a positive, forward-looking and inclusive alternative which they can be part of.

The political response

Challenging UKIP's vision of Britain is also vital in helping to determine how the main political parties respond to the right wing party. It was evident that all three political parties hardened their anti-immigrant rhetoric after UKIP's second place in the Eastleigh by-election. This process continued after UKIP's success in May's county council elections.

One can only imagine how the other parties will react if, as quite likely, UKIP come first in next year's European Elections.

While UKIP is likely to struggle in the 2015 General Election because of the voting system, they could still end up playing a major role in the future direction of British politics by pushing the main parties to the right.

This is fundamentally what is at stake and why offering a different vision of Britain to that put forward by UKIP is so important. Without a successful alternative vision, backed by positive grassroots campaigning in local communities up and down the country, we have little chance in convincing the main parties against swinging to the right.

Only by mobilising civic society and winning over the undecided middle can we persuade mainstream politicians that they do not just have to appeal to those voters who are attracted by UKIP, and if they do then they risk alienating themselves from others. And one never knows, if we can build a broad and big

HOPE not hate supports the Hackney Unites group to produce regular local newspapers.



enough alliance we might even be able to shift the political debate in our favour.

Beginning this September, HOPE not hate will begin a new campaign push around the country. We will produce tabloid newspapers, local newsletters, briefings and basic arguments for our supporters to use. We will challenge myths and promote our vision of society. We will build alliances locally and nationally and will campaign positively.

Woolwich fallout

The awful murder of Lee Rigby quite understandably disrupted our national discussion about UKIP. Our supporters, many of whom were actively involved in limiting anti-Muslim backlash in their communities, were keen to discuss the EDL as well as UKIP in our meetings.

However, it soon became apparent that building a durable opposition to the EDL and Islamophobia dovetailed quite neatly to how our supporters wanted to provide a positive alternative to the vision of Britain offered by UKIP.

It is about bringing people together against hate and prejudice. It is about uniting people around what they have in common and developing spaces for people for people to interact. It is about dispelling myths, understanding anxieties and highlighting the positives of our multicultural society. It is also about bringing people from different backgrounds and seemingly different interests together around shared issues and concerns.

This is our new campaign against all those who seek to divide us, be it UKIP or the EDL. It is simply called Together.

Building community spirit

By Dave Porter

A SHINING EXAMPLE of community neighbourliness is being practised in Walthamstow, all started off by a street party initiative which has grown and grown.

Residents from the Queens Boundary community in the borough felt something was lacking in their community and asked Father Steve Saxby, the parish priest at the local church, St Barnabas, if he had any ideas for bringing people together.

With Steven's help, residents put out a newsletter to more than 700 homes in nine streets surrounding the church, calling for a community meeting for people to come forward with ideas.

More than 50 people turned up to the meeting and the idea of a street party was universally recommended. With an organising committee set up, work started on the arranging the street party, with 700 residents turning up to last year's event more than 1,000 to this year's.

Steven says that those who attended were a vibrant mix of residents: Muslims, Christians, Asian families, Afro-Caribbean people, as well as eastern Europeans. Streets were closed off for children to play, home-made bunting was hung from houses and lampposts and tables and chairs arranged

Residents this year brought more than 100 cakes to be consumed and activities included football, stalls and even a visit from the fire brigade.

Steven said: "The effect on the community has been absolutely brilliant. It's the first time the whole of the community has been out together like that. People began to engage with one another and talk to each other on the street. You can't go out of your front door now without having a conversation!"

"One of the nicest things was seeing children playing in the street, something you don't normally see."

On top of the street parties, Queens Boundary residents have started to come together in other ways too. They have set up a community street gardening club which meets every month and involves residents planting out flower beds and supporting wildlife through planting native species and building nesting boxes.

The gardening group planted up 10 local flower beds last year and has since added more than 1000 bulbs to the beds and tree pits on neighbouring streets.

People are encouraged to plant up tree pits on their streets and there is bulb planting planned for the autumn this year.

On top of this, new signs are being added to the beds this summer highlighting the littering and letting people know about the work on their street. As a result of the scheme, fly tipping in the area has reduced because of the planting.

Steve said: "As a community we hadn't really done anything together before. The first street party was a novelty, this year's was a test to see if people would turn up again, and now we've got all these other projects on the go."

So far this year the community events have included a winter fair and a Mad Hatters' tea party, as well as residents taking part in a City Safe initiative. There is also a thriving Facebook page and community website, which can be found at <http://queensboundary.wordpress.com>.



A large, vibrant poster for 'Hackney Unites'. The main title 'Hackney Unites' is in large yellow letters at the top, with a sunburst graphic. Below it is the subtitle 'Supported by the HOPE not hate campaign'. The poster features several smaller images and text boxes: a top left box for 'NUT' (Hackney tenants demand decent homes); a top right box for 'NUT' (Holding communities together); a middle left box for 'NUT' (Community in Hackney Stop and Search); a middle right box for 'NUT' (See you at the Dalston People's festival); and a bottom left box for 'NUT' (15th JUNE 2012 & 1st JULY 2012 Hackney People's Festival). A large central image shows a street scene with a car and a person. A QR code is in the bottom right corner. The website 'www.hackneyunites.org.uk' is prominently displayed at the bottom.

PURPLE RAIN

PUTTING UKIP UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT

Farage hypocritical over tax avoidance



UKIP LEADER Nigel Farage has been branded a hypocrite over revelations that he opened an offshore trust fund in the Isle of Man in an attempt to slash his tax bill.

Farage intended to channel money into a trust fund called the Farage Family Educational Trust 1654 which was set up by a tax advisor employed by Nigel Farage.

A tax expert told The Mirror newspaper who uncovered

the story: "There are only two good reasons to set up an Isle of Man trust. One is secrecy, you don't want someone to know what is in there. The other is tax avoidance. And sometimes, of course, they go together."

The story comes just a month after Farage made a speech to the European Parliament in which he attacked companies and individuals who avoid paying their tax.

Cheshire: UKIP defector is convicted slum landlord

UKIP HAVE picked up a large number of councillors this year via defections from the Conservative party.

One of the latest to switch from blue to purple is Brian Silvester (pictured) who sits on Cheshire East Council.

He will be less keen on people knowing that he is also a convicted slum landlord who put his tenants lives at considerable risk.

Brian Silvester pleaded guilty to 11 fire safety breaches, including holes in the ceiling and roof, inflammable material in corridors, loose wiring, broken smoke detectors and fire extinguishers which hadn't been inspected for 20 years, following a joint prosecution by the fire service and his own council.

Councillor Silvester was fined £45,000 with £22,000 costs and narrowly escaped going to jail.



Norfolk: UKIP shoplifting councillor resigns

A NEW UKIP councillor has resigned in disgrace after it emerged he had been caught shoplifting in his local Poundstretcher store.

Peter Georgiou was a UKIP councillor on Norfolk County Council, narrowly winning Thetford West by one vote in May.

Georgiou was caught shoplifting in the store in 2012. Police were called and dealt with the incident through a "community resolution" that saw Georgiou pay for the goods with Poundstretcher banning him from their shop.

The by-election called following the resignation of Georgiou will cost the Norfolk taxpayer £7,000.

North Yorkshire: UKIP activist arrested for racist Facebook posts

A UKIP activist from North Yorkshire has been arrested on suspicion of stirring up racial hatred following a series of racist postings on Facebook.

North Yorkshire police have questioned Tony Nixon from Stokesley after it was alleged he made postings about destroying mosques, setting Muslims on fire and running over people from Pakistan with a bus.

The account includes a number of offensive photographs, including an image of President Barack Obama and his wife, Michelle, which had been altered so that the couple look like apes.

Another post states: "Instead of turning Ground Zero into a mosque why not

turn some mosques into ground zero?"

The comments were reported to the police by The Northern Echo after Hope not Hate handed a file of Nixon's comments to the newspaper.

UKIP have subsequently suspended Tony Nixon's membership pending the police investigation.

A spokeswoman for North Yorkshire Police said: "We can confirm that a 66-year-old man from Great Broughton was arrested on May 23, 2013 after racist and offensive comments were posted on a Facebook page.

"The man has been released on police bail while the investigation continues."

UKIP attack on foreign born doctors

UKIP LEADER Nigel Farage has launched an extraordinary attack on the NHS by claiming that many of Britain's foreign-born doctors "are not up to scratch".

Farage told The Yorkshire Post that doctors who come to the UK from overseas have "lower standards" than British born doctors and are "bringing huge problems" for the NHS and that he also believes that large sections of the NHS should be outsourced to private companies.

It is rather surprising that Nigel Farage has such scant regard for the NHS following his much-publicised plane crash in 2010. Farage, who suffered rib, chest and facial injuries was taken to the John Radcliffe hospital in Oxford where he received the usual high standard of care the NHS has to offer.

The forgotten men

The BNP splinter group that continues to be dogged by a lack of activity *Matthew Collins* reports

The British Democratic Party (BDP) finally launched its 'London' branch at a meeting held in Kent at the end of May.

The BNP splinter group, for which some held such high hopes, continues to be dogged by a lack of activity other than descending en masse at meetings of other fringe groups on the extreme far-right.

The launch saw former BNP organiser Julian Leppert emerge as the party's London organiser. Party president Andrew Brons, MEP, addressed the meeting, as did far-right barrister Adrian Davies who is now the party's treasurer and main source of income.

Kevin Scott, the party's Gateshead-based chairman, did not attend because, it is said, he could not afford the travel fare.

Brons has become increasingly disillusioned with the party and especially the lack of activity of some of his colleagues. He had hoped to take a backseat and advise on policy, but it seems plenty of others had the same idea and very little is happening.

Having fielded only three candidates in May's elections, all of whom were roundly defeated, Brons has been pushing for Scott to be more active in building the party, but to his dismay the party chairman seems content just to antagonise BNP members on social media instead.

The BDP has also failed to make any intervention in the wake of the murder of Lee Rigby. If the party cannot make political capital out of this then it is hard to see them doing anything in the near future.

An increasingly disillusioned Brons will retire from Brussels next year, before the electorate gets a chance to vote him out. Having dithered about launching the new party, Brons is increasingly frustrated about its top heavy leadership's preference for talking about obscure politics and not undertaking political activities.



Searching for Anjem

POLICE RUSHED to the home of hate preacher Anjem Choudary after the tiny far-right group Britain First posted an online video threatening to 'arrest' him following the murder of Drummer Lee Rigby. Britain First's nominal chair Paul Golding, a former BNP councillor, issued the threat and even issued a deadline, before police moved in to protect Choudary and his family.

Later, the BNP splinter group, which survives on stunts and online gimmicks, had to issue an appeal for people to come forward with the address where Choudary was hiding. The forum used by Golding and co was later hijacked and ridiculed by antifascists, themselves no fans of Choudary.

Britain First has been struggling since its founder Jim Dowson had bail conditions prohibiting him from using the internet or telephone imposed as a result of his part in the Northern Ireland flag protests. As a result, the umbrella group English National Resistance which includes Britain First, The English Democrats and South East Alliance (SEA) has faltered. Members of the SEA are believed to be heading to Northern Ireland for the Protestant marching season this month in an attempt to forge links.

Tiny splinters

THE TINY National Front suffered another series of walkouts last month when veteran Nazi and serial splitter of far-right parties, Eddie Morrison, was admitted back into the party. The re-admittance of Morrison was against the wishes of party chairman Ian Edward, who resigned in protest, hoping a large number of the NF's members would follow. Few did.

Whether another veteran Nazi, former BNP number two Richard Edmonds, decides to stay on with the NF or switch to the British Democratic Party (BDP) remains to be seen.

A whimper

Only 80 people attended a national socialist Black Metal gig at the Bull pub, near Dagenham East tube station last month.

Organised by veteran nazi Eddie Stampton, the gig brought together Greek nazi band Der Sturmer, March or Die, and the British Movement-linked Whitelaw. There was an interesting mix in the audience, with the majority being Black Metal fans and a significant number of Eastern European Nazis present.

Stampton had hoped the gig was going to be a lot bigger but the rumours of his loose lips might have put some people off.

LGBTI community in Africa continually demonised

By Jessica Sinclair

Homophobia remains rampant and institutionalised across sub-Saharan Africa, a new report from Amnesty International has revealed. Homosexuality is criminalised in 38 states across the continent, with South Africa being the only country to completely legalise and decriminalise the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender/Transsexual and Intersexed (LGBTI) community. However, even here the LGBTI community still face harassment and violence from other areas.

Much of the discrimination is co-ordinated by the state. Since 2009, the Ugandan government has been trying to pass legislation to impose the death penalty on the LGBTI community. Apart from the obvious violation of human rights of the LGBTI community, passing this legislation could mean that it would be illegal to create another bill to overturn it.

Uganda is especially worrying because state leaders and powerful institutions promote homophobia in order to gain support. These views include homosexuality as a purely Western idea brought over to Africa to take over the continent, and should be rejected. This, in turn, signals to people that discriminating the LGBTI community is acceptable, and by doing so they are following the constitution.

People can be arrested for simply the perception of homosexuality and based on evidence that is flimsy or an excuse to harass individuals based on their orientation. In Cameroon, there was a case where two people



Uganda Pride 2012 participant.
Photo: David Robinson

were sentenced because they were buying lube and condoms, enough 'evidence' to arrest them. The police, who are there to protect and respect people without discrimination, are not giving the LGBTI community the protection they deserve and are increasingly put in vulnerable positions.

Non-state actors, especially the media, contribute to homophobia in sub-Saharan Africa and fuel the violence and harassment towards the LBGTI community. As the state often fails to protect the LGBTI community from homophobia, the media often goes unchallenged and free to spread the message of discrimination.

Media influence

In places like Uganda, the newspapers have advocated a message of violence against LGBTI individuals, consequently making the situation more volatile. With such a broad influence, the media needs to be monitored if change is to take place.

Although South Africa has laws prohibiting discrimination based on sexual identity, police still do not enforce punishment on those who enact violence on the LGBTI community. There is evidence to suggest that LGBTI individuals are abused in police custody and are arrested due to their perceived or actual sexual identity.

Laws against same sex practice

UGANDA

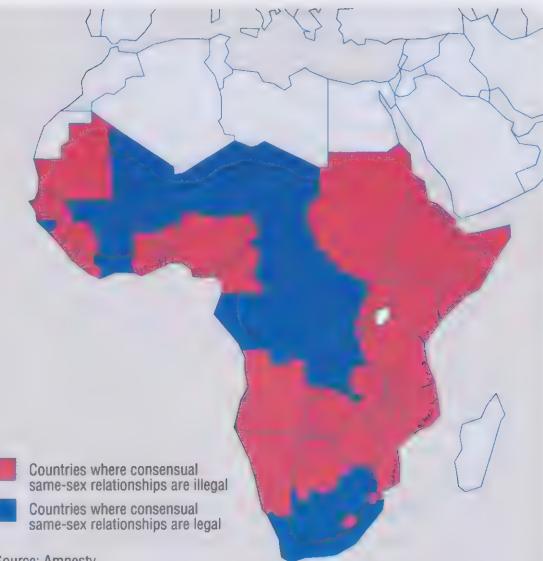
- Has laws persecuting both men and women
- Any male or female who attempts to or has knowledge of a person of the same-sex sexually can be imprisoned for up to seven years
- Any act against another person which is perceived to be indecent can be imprisoned

KENYA

- Has laws persecuting both men and women
- Any male or female who attempts to or has knowledge of a person of the same-sex sexually can be imprisoned for up to 14 years

ZIMBABWE

- Has laws persecuting men but not women
- Prohibits sodomy either forcefully or with consent with a prison sentence of up to 14 years



by Islamic progressives to accept homosexuality as natural, even though this is a small sector of religion in sub-Saharan Africa.

Although there are signs that religious leaders are starting to accept homosexuality as natural and promote it as such, evangelical Christians still have a big foothold in the African community. Even though their ideas are extreme, their views mirror popular perceptions of the general population.

Without the state and media altering their own views on homosexuality the reach of more progressive political leaders will be limited. And without the greater political will to change discrimination and violence towards the LGBTI community will continue.

Map of Gay rights in Africa. Source: Amnesty



Lesbians are often subjected to 'corrective rape' and are not protected by the police. It is important to note that while South Africa does have laws to protect their rights in place, if they are not enforced then they are rendered useless.

Education is extremely important if substantial change is to occur, and not just at school level. If people are not taught that being gay is a natural part of humanity, homosexuality will remain a taboo in sub-Saharan Africa. Homosexuality needs to be accepted into civil society as normal and there needs to be open debate

in public in order for this to happen.

If positive education is not enforced, then people will continue to think homosexuality is a choice and a taboo, that being homosexual is wrong and should therefore be punished. This, coupled with overturning homophobic laws, will signal substantial and positive change.

Religious homophobia is a factor that severely undermines any change which can come from state level or education. Christianity is often used to justify discrimination against the LGBTI community, often advocating that homosexuality is not part of African identity.

Recruits

Such views are exacerbated by American Evangelical Christians like Scott Lively who claim that homosexuality is linked to paedophilia, genocide and HIV/AIDS. They also claim that the LGBTI community 'recruits' children and teenagers to homosexuality, arguing that homosexuality is a choice and can be corrected.

Unfortunately, especially in countries like Uganda, these ideas often fit into the view endorsed by the state and the media, creating an environment where people are unable to feel safe in their own homes.

However, not all religious leaders advocate this hostile perception of homosexuality. Bishop Senyonjo in Kampala responded to the allegation that the LGBTI community 'recruit' people by arguing that sexuality is development and nature. He emphasised that homosexuality and sexual identity is not about recruitment, but rather a fundamental part of a person's identity. There is also an attempt

Terror trial gets under

From Michael Klein for Antifa-Net in Munich

MUNICH IS CURRENTLY the scene of one of Germany's biggest terrorist trials since 1945. Facing the judges are Beate Zschäpe, Ralf Wohlleben, Holger Gerlach, Carsten Schultze and André Eminger.

Zschäpe is accused of complicity in the killing of nine migrants and a female police officer, arson and membership of a terrorist group, the National Socialist Underground (NSU); the others are charged with aiding and abetting its activities between 1998 and 2011 by providing weapons and IDs and hiring cars and lodgings.

Since November 2011, when Uwe Böhnhardt and Uwe Mundlos – who formed the core of the NSU terrorist gang that included Zschäpe – committed suicide when confronted by police, there has been widespread debate about right-wing terrorism and the failure of the authorities to detect the group.

From the 1990s onwards, Böhnhardt, Mundlos and Zschäpe belonged to nazi groups in Thuringia and committed offences which brought them to the attention of the regional police and secret services. Although police found explosives in a garage rented by Zschäpe in 1998, the trio were allowed to escape.

While police and secret services had several informants deep inside the regional nazi scene, among them leading activists, and had seized numerous address and telephone lists linked to nazis who later became

known as NSU supporters, the group was able to organise its activities more or less uninterrupted. These involved two bomb attacks, 10 murders, and more than a dozen bank robberies.

The failure of the police and secret services is currently under investigation by parliamentary committees. So far it has been revealed that the same authorities that had so many high-ranking informers in the nazi scene were not able to fasten onto the group.

Instead, the murders were explained away by the supposed involvement of victims in alleged criminal activities. Relatives of the victims were treated badly by the police.

Nazi scene

When police officer Michèle Kiesewetter was gunned down in Heilbronn in 2007 police used a lot of effort to find out if a group of gypsies who had stayed nearby was involved.

A year before, in 2006, a profiler raised the idea that racism might form the leading motive behind the murders. But this approach was countered by other reports and other "experts".

The NSU terrorist trial started on 6 May and brings together a cast of four prosecutors, five defendants with 11 lawyers, and 86 plaintiffs who have engaged more than 60 advocates.

Until now Zschäpe has exercised her right to silence, as have Wohlleben and Eminger. The strategy of Zschäpe's lawyers rests partly



Photos released by German federal criminal police office on May 8, 2012 shows Uwe Mundlos, Beate Zschäpe and Uwe Böhnhardt, alleged members of the far right terror cell, the National Socialist Underground

on the fact that police and secret services had so heavily infiltrated the nazi scene in Thuringia. Allowing the NSU to develop and perpetrate crimes had been a trap by state agencies to enable them to present the "national resistance" as violent and criminal, it is argued.

Gerlach read a statement in which he admitted supporting the group and meeting members regularly, even after he had moved from Thuringia to the Hanover area and after his exit from the nazi scene in 2004.

He claimed the support given by him, for example, allowing the trio to use his driver's licence and passport, as well as handing over a gun, resulted from friendship and was not driven by political agreement or support for violence. According to Gerlach, he did not know what the core group of the NSU really did, offering his apologies for his own role and announcing his willingness to take responsibility. At the same

time, he refused to answer any further questions.

Homophobic

Carsten Schultze is the only defendant who has so far given extensive information about his role in the NSU case. As a teenager, he made contact with nazi activists and took part in activities in Thuringia. Working closely with Ralf Wohlleben, he became a leading activist in the youth organisation of the National Democratic Party in Thuringia in 2000.

He started to question his involvement after hearing homophobic comments and increasingly felt unhappy, being gay himself. Finally, he moved away to North Rhine-Westphalia and went to university. In Düsseldorf, he lived openly as a homosexual and engaged in supporting AIDS victims. Further political engagement in the university's student parliament was halted by anti-fascist intervention.

Schultze was approached by Wohlleben shortly after the

way



disappearance of Böhnhardt, Mundlos and Zschäpe and was asked to stay in contact with them. He did this by regular telephone calls. Later, he broke into Zschäpe's former apartment to remove incriminating documents and was asked by Böhnhardt and Mundlos to "organise" a handgun and ammunition.

Schultze learned in 2000 about another act of violence perpetrated by the group when a pocket torch packed with explosive, was placed in a restaurant run by a Turkish immigrant in Nuremberg. It detonated, injuring a cleaning lady. This assault had not been on the inventory of NSU crimes until his testimony.

So far, Schultze has openly admitted criminal and violent activities he was involved in as a nazi. While it is believable that he has quit the nazi scene, his statements on his former political attitudes and beliefs remain too general.

Nazis have been campaigning for months in solidarity with the remanded Ralf Wohlleben. As part of these activities they have distributed leaflets near the court building demanding his immediate release.

THE NSU: Timeline of Terrorism

6 May 2013: Start of NSU terrorist trial, in Munich, of Zschäpe for membership of a terrorist group and Wohlleben, Gerlach, and Schultze for supporting a terrorist organisation.



■ Trial expected to last of two-and-a-half years.
■ 600 witnesses to be called with 86 plaintiffs represented by 62 lawyers.

13 Nov 2011: Arrest of Holger Gerlach as suspected helper of NSU

29 Nov 2011: Arrest of Ralf Wohlleben (pictured) in Jena as suspected helper of NSU

1 Feb 2012: Arrest of Carsten Schultze as alleged helper of NSU

24 Nov 2011: Arrest of André Eminger as suspected helper of NSU

4 Nov 2011: Zschäpe sets her flat in Zwickau ablaze just hours after the deaths of Mundlos and Böhnhardt. Police there later find 19 guns, DVDs admitting NSU crimes and criminal materials

7 Sep 2011: Bank robbery in Arnstadt

8 Nov 2011: Zschäpe gives herself up, accompanied by a police lawyer

4 Nov 2011: Bank robbery in Eisenach. Deaths of Mundlos and Böhnhardt by shooting in their torched mobile home

5 Oct 2006: Bank robbery in Zwickau

15 June 2005: Theodoros Boulgarides shot dead in Munich

18 Jan 2007: Bank robbery in Stralsund

25 Apr 2007: Murder of police officer Michèle Kiesewetter in Heilbronn

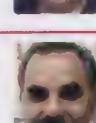


7 Nov 2006: Bank robbery in Stralsund

23 Sep 2003: Bank robbery in Chemnitz

29 Aug 2001: Fruiterer Habil Kilic gunned down in Munich

6 Apr 2006: Internet café owner Halit Yozgat murdered in Kassel



22 November 2005: Bank robbery in Chemnitz

27 Jun 2001: Fruiterer Suleiman Tasköprü assassinated in Hamburg

14 & 18 May 2004: Two more bank raids in Chemnitz

9 Jun 2005: Ismail Yazar murdered in Nuremberg



25 Feb 2004: Trader Mehmet Turgut murdered in Rostock



6 Oct 1999 - 30 Nov 2000: Three bank robberies in Chemnitz

9 Jun 2001: 22 injured in detonation of nail bomb in Cologne-Mülheim

13 Jun 2001: Murder of Abdurrahim Özüdogru in Nuremberg



19 Jan 2001: Bombing of business premises of German Iranian family in Cologne. NSU claims responsibility on its 2011 DVD

26 Jan 1997: Police raid homes of Böhnhardt, Mundlos and Zschäpe.

28th Jan 1997: International arrest warrant issued for the three nazis

9 Sep 2000: Nuremberg florist Enver Simsek shot with the Ceská 83 pistol used in further NSU killings



26 Jan 1997: The trio go underground

Four primed pipe bombs, 1.4kg of TNT and nazi propaganda material found in Zschäpe's rented garage. Böhnhardt walks away free.

1 Nov 1996: Mundlos, Böhnhardt and Zschäpe march with Saxony section of Blood&Honour at former Buchenwald concentration camp

24 Jan 1997: Mundlos, Böhnhardt and Zschäpe attend NPD Dresden rally against 'The Crimes of the Wehrmacht' exhibition

17 Aug 1996: Zschäpe and Mundlos at Rudolf Hess memorial march in Worms

13 Apr 1996: Böhnhardt hangs a doll with Star of David, labelled 'Jew', from motorway bridge with cables to fake bomb. Sentenced in October 1997 to two years and three months' youth custody for this but never completes sentence

19 Aug 1995: Mundlos attends Rudolf Hess memorial march in Schneverdingen



Zschäpe and Mundlos at Rudolf Hess memorial in 1996

Uwe Mundlos born 11 August 1973
Beate Zschäpe born 2 January 1975
Uwe Böhnhardt born 1 October 1977

Anti-fascist punched to death in Paris

Jean-Yves Camus reports from Paris

CLÉMENT MÉRIC, 19, was a gifted student at Sciences-Po, the *Alma Mater* of France's exclusive political and civil service élite. But he was no élitist. On the contrary, he was a well-known anti-fascist leader and an activist of the Action antifasciste Paris-banlieue, as well as a trade unionist affiliated to the left-wing SUD-Solidaires union.

On 6 June, he was declared dead after a violent clash with fascist thugs at a private sale of Fred Perry and Ben Sherman clothing the day before. It is believed the fascists called additional like-minded heavies to the scene – after a first clash – to outnumber their opponents. Clément was punched in the face, probably with a brass knuckleduster.

A police crackdown on the fascist Jeunesses Nationalistes Révolutionnaires (JNR) and Troisième Voie movements occurred the following day and eight people were arrested, including the alleged killer, 20-year-old Esteban Morillo, and his accomplice Katia Veloso.

All those involved in the killing were members or followers of the aforementioned movements, led by a notorious veteran of the French skinhead scene, 48-year-old Serge Ayoub. The JNR is more a stewarding crew than a political party. It has a membership of around 50 middle-aged people, iron-pumpers who provide security for the few demonstrations Ayoub organises in the capital.

Troisième Voie is a typical 'Third Way' movement that promotes a brand of ultra-nationalism, anti-globalisation, and Strasserite-like 'Socialism' aimed at drawing working-class youth to the extreme-right. Although many members are boneheads, they are separate from the B&H or Hammerskin Nation networks. Most of the activists in these outfits live in the Paris area or northern France.

Clément Méric's brutal killing drew around 5,000 anti-fascists, trade unionists and members of the left-wing political parties to two remembrance marches.

Repressive

There were also reactions across the political spectrum. While the left overwhelmingly called for repressive action against the extreme right, the Front National was busy trying to explain how it had severed ties with Ayoub and his mob. Marine Le Pen, despite the fact that she and

Ayoub have met at least twice, in 2008 and 2010, hastened to distance herself from him.

There is proof that some JNR members have stewarded FN demonstrations, either on a personal initiative or a more institutionalised form of cooperation. The Conservative UMP, although it expressed his shock and horror at the killing, chose to promote the inane idea that both the anti-fascist and the fascist movements are violent enemies of democracy and should be outlawed forthwith.

The French Prime Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault, for his part, chose to focus on banning the JNR and Troisième Voie by decree. Such a prohibition could become effective at the end of June or in early July. The JNR's monthly organ, *Salut Public*, will not be affected, though. Nor will its Paris headquarters, 'Le Local', which is both a pub and a conference room where events are held every week, featuring the Who's Who of the extreme right scene, from monarchists to national-revolutionaries, conspiracy-theory freaks and anti-Islam propagandists.

The debate now within the French civil administration and government revolves around the issue of whether it is wise to ban only the JNR and TV or to take a broader approach to the resurgence of the violent far-right.

If this option is adopted other groups involved in the violent clashes which took place at the end of the recent anti-gay marriage demos may also be banned during the summer.

The anti-gay rights demonstrations were huge – mobilising up to half-a-million people – and although organisers were hardline conservatives of the UMP or Catholic fundamentalists, the fascist scene took the opportunity to show up, recruit new members and confront the police.

Ironically, the JNR and Troisième Voie did not take part in the protests as the issue of gay marriage is of no interest to the bonehead scene. The most active are the fascist and antisemitic Jeunesses nationalistes, led by Alexandre Gabriac, their twin movement CŒuvre française led by Yvan Benedetti, the fascist, Catholic fundamentalist Renouveau français headed by Thibaut de Chassey and the nazi Groupe Union Défense (GUD) youth movement. All of these, as well as the extremists of Bloc Identitaire and Génération Identitaire, now face being outlawed.



Clément Méric comrade and friend

From Esbé for La Horde and Antifa-Net
<http://lahorde.samizdat.net>



WHO WAS CLÉMENT MÉRIC? That is the question that gripped the media in the immediate aftermath of his brutal murder by fascists on 6 June.

Having fallen to the blows of a gang of ultra-violent nationalists, 18-year-old Clément could, of course, only have been part of a band of misfits, a “redskin” “feisty” and “extremist”, canards rejected by all those who knew him or met him.

A native of Brest, Clément, from starting school, listened to his inner voice and fought for his beliefs, not as an individual but always in a group setting. At 15, he signed up with the National Confederation of Labour (CNT), an anarcho-syndicalist trade union, and actively took part in youth mobilisations against the educational reforms introduced by Nicolas Sarkozy’s right-wing conservative government. An amateur punk musician, he attended anti-fascist concerts and engaged in Brest’s alternative culture.

After gaining his baccalauréat with flying colours, Clément moved to Paris to pursue political science studies at the city’s illustrious Sciences Po high school. A brilliant student with a flawless commitment to activism, Clément joined the Student Union South, in which he took a left libertarian position, and made contact with the Paris-Banlieue Antifascist Action (AFA), a group of young anti-fascists.

Even while recovering from serious illness, Clément stayed in the fight. When right-wing France poured into the streets of Paris to demonstrate their rage against equal rights and gay marriage, he took part in one of the few counter-demonstrations behind a banner that declared ‘Homophobia kills’. He also joined demonstrations against Islamophobia and for the rights of the Palestinians.

Anti-fascist

A vegetarian and animal rights advocate, his main contribution was his active opposition to right-wing extremism. He was among 200 anti-fascists gathered to protest loudly at the Front National’s annual demonstration on 1 May and who were attacked by a mob of ultra-nationalists.

As recently as June, he was actively involved in a project close to his heart: the organisation of a rap concert in support of victims of fascist violence. The concert did take place but, sadly, to pay homage to him.

Clément was not only a sincere political activist involved in many struggles, but also a person who loved life. His intelligence and kindness left, in the various political circles he frequented, the image of someone who could share his beliefs without imposing them, who was certainly no ‘hothead’ and cautiously measured the risks he took.

There was a full life in front of him and many more battles to fight before he was so callously taken. For his family, his comrades, for anti-fascists and all those moved by his death, the best way to remember what he lived for is to continue the struggle.

Where Nazi collaborators and criminals are honoured by EU and NATO States

Dovid Katz in Vilnius looks at the development of the 'Double Genocide' revision of history that hurls the crimes of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia into the same pot.

BRITONS HAVE just cause for pride in their WWII struggle against Hitler and fascism. Had they not stood up to the Nazis when the rest of Europe was crumbling, fleeing, or selfishly hiding behind supposed neutrality, it is open to question whether America and others would have joined in to help save the Continent from fascist rule and the Nazis' programme of destruction.

For some minorities, including European Jews, Roma, Sinti, and known gay people, Nazism meant rapid genocide. For Slavs and Balts, it meant the intended eradication of their countries after Nazi victory made way for a new Nazified eastern playground for the Master Race.

Little known to most people, the entire history of World War II is now being rewritten top-to-bottom by right-wing (and far-right) East European politicians and their élite associates in universities, media, the arts, literature, and museums.

Today's East European-generated revisionist history has a number of competing names – all of which derive from its core notion that Nazi and Soviet crimes are inherently equal as a matter of sacred principle – and include "symmetry", "equality of victimhood", "equal evaluation of totalitarian regimes" and, most common nowadays, "double genocide".

Double genocide is a chimera serving a number of (ultra)nationalist purposes in the Baltic states especially. Not least, it provides cover for the massive participation in the killing of the Jewish population and others (which led to the

three Baltic countries having the highest rate of murder of their Jewish populations during the Holocaust – around the 95% mark.

If these killers are heralded as anti-Soviet fighters – and to be sure, they were anti-Soviet – then fascist war criminals become heroes. This dovetails with the anti-Jewish, anti-Russian, anti-minority sentiment that held that "Those people all hoped for a Soviet victory after the Nazi invasion, so they got what they deserve".

Collaborators glorified

In the Baltic states, revisionist history is perceived as a reliable geostrategic tool for the present and future. The argument runs: if the Soviet Union was equivalent to Hitler and Russia is the successor state to the USSR the same way Adenauer's Germany succeeded the Nazis, then what a big stick we have against Vladimir Putin.

In March this year, the Latvian capital, Riga, was delivered up to ceremonies honouring the country's Waffen SS. Last year, the Estonian Parliament passed the already infamous 'Valentine's Day law' (as it is called in anti-fascist circles), making way for sanitisation of its Waffen SS as heroes. The southern Latvian town of Bauska has also unveiled a new monument to its SS. In contrast to Western governments, the fragile Jewish community based in Riga issued a robust statement of protest.

Lithuania, which did not have a Waffen SS, is being dragged by its state apparatus into a situation even worse than honouring Hitler allies

by honouring direct killers and accomplices, including the 1941 Lithuanian Activist Front (LAF), whose white-armbanded fascist death squads murdered thousands of Jewish citizens in some 40 locations before Hitler's hordes even arrived. When it was disbanded by the Nazis, many LAF members became voluntary Jew-shooters. There are now street names, memorial plaques and museum exhibits glorifying these fascists as "freedom fighters".

In 2010 a Lithuanian court legalised the public display of swastikas, arguing that they are just ancient Baltic symbols. The same year the country's parliament passed a 'red-brown law', in effect criminalising the opinion that the only genocide in the country was the Nazi one.

In the mid 1990s, and then again in 2012, the remains of two major local Hitlerite figures were repatriated from America (where both "heroes" fled after the war) for reburial with full honours in glittering ceremonies.

The first was the head of the LAF, Kazys Škirpa, who was kept in Berlin when the June 1941 invasion came and had to make do with vicious anti-semitic radio speeches inciting violence. And a year ago, it was the turn of the actual Nazi puppet prime minister, Juozas Ambrazevičius (later Brazaitis), who personally signed one German order for the Jews of his city, Kaunas (Kovno), to be sent to a concentration camp, and another for the remaining Jewish citizens in town to be herded into the ghetto within four weeks.

Perverting History

There is a bas relief and lecture hall named after him at Kaunas' top university, Vytautas Magnus University, a sad irony given that Vytautas (Witold) was the grand duke whose 14th century charters of tolerance and equality exemplified the grace that made the Grand Duchy of Lithuania so great in medieval Europe.

Many of the 1941 murderers were no ordinary thugs. They knew their history. One of the LAF's leaflets says in black and white: "The ancient right of refuge in Lithuania, granted to the Jews during the times of Vytautas the Great, is completely and finally revoked." An equally charming leaflet offered pardon to criminals who could prove they had killed at least one Jew.

Since 2006, Lithuanian prosecutors closely associated with the far-right 'Genocide Research Centre' have been pursuing not Nazi war criminals, but Jewish veterans of the anti-Nazi partisans, in kangaroo "war crimes investigations". None was ever charged with anything but all are defamed for posterity. In their late eighties or early nineties now, they still await apologies.

In Eastern Europe, it was the Soviets, in alliance with the Anglo-American allies, who were fighting Hitler between June 1941 and the war's end. There were no British or American troops around. For the tiny percentage of Jews who survived, early escape to Russia, or later escape from the ghetto to the Soviet-supported partisans, was the only hope. The Soviet peoples



(above) Front banner of neo-Nazi march in Kaunas, Lithuania this year features the same 1941 Nazi puppet prime minister who was reburied by the state's authorities with full honours amid glittering events in 2012. Photo: DefendingHistory.com

(below) reburial of Nazi puppet PM in May 2012 (arrival at Vilnius airport of remains from US)



made huge sacrifices to defeat Hitler in the east.

That is not to take anything away from the *true* Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian heroes of 1941: those citizens of their countries who risked themselves and their family to do the right thing and save a neighbour. They are the ones after whom streets and university lecture halls should be named, not the fascist killers and collaborators.

Every new movement has its foundation document. The constitution of Double Genocide is the so-called 2008 'Prague Declaration' that has the word *same* five times in relation to Nazi and Soviet crimes.

It demands a single mix-'n'-match day of remembrance for Nazi and Soviet crimes in all of Europe and calls for the

"overhaul of European history textbooks so that children could learn and be warned about Communism and its crimes in the same way as they have been taught to assess the Nazi crimes".

Last year, 71 Euro-parliamentarians signed a rebuttal document, the Seventy Years Declaration (SYD), on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the January 1942 Wannsee Conference which formalised the so-called Final Solution.

Though mostly signed by MEPs and MPs affiliated to social democratic and centre-left parties, it attracted a number of liberal and conservative signatures.

Sounds of silence

Instead of polite refutation or concern at the Double Genocide movement and

its glorification of fascism, many naive westerners, particularly academic types seduced by adulation, grants, happy holidays, and medals have offered only silence and submission. On the governmental level, geostrategic concerns have been paramount in the failure of the UK and the US to rise to the occasion.

The concerns of the west, not least the perceived need for a strong anti-Putin alliance on the eastern rim of the European Union, have led the Americans, British, Canadians and others to turn a blind eye to the far-right's grip on history, ethics and human rights issues in some parts of East Europe. Russians, Roma, Jews, Gays and other

minorities are now asking: "Where on earth is this 'West' that we so eagerly joined?"

Then there are the UK-specific aspects. In 2009, David Cameron's Conservatives, still in opposition, and under pressure from the party's Eurosceptic wing, ditched their European Parliament (EP) alliance with the mainstream centre-right EP grouping that included Sarkozy and Merkel, and went for the East European-based far right party that takes in, as Lib-Dem leader Nick Clegg correctly put it in one of the leaders' debates during the 2010 UK election campaign: "nutters, antisemites, people who deny climate change exists and homophobes". Anyone who makes shrines to Nazi collaborators and perpetrators is by any fair definition "far right".

Heroes of Skinheads and – EU states!

And that takes us to another practical difficulty: a new suave, silver-tongued far right that consists not just of skinheads but of diplomats and academics who know how to impress Western *naïfs* enjoying their new-found East European recreation centre.

One of the first places to look for evidence is in the roster of heroes. We noted the 2012 reburial by the state of the 1941 Nazi puppet Ambrazevičius and the shrines to him in a major university. Each year since 2008, the Lithuanian government has been facilitating neo-Nazi marches in the heart of the country's major cities, Kaunas, and the beautiful capital Vilnius, on 16 February and 11 March respectively.

This year, the Kaunas marchers carried as their lead banner the image of the same 1941 Nazi puppet prime minister. When neo-Nazis adore Hitler-era collaborators that the state is honouring with reburials and shrines, we know that something is badly wrong.

■ Dovid Katz, formerly professor of Yiddish at Vilnius University, Lithuania, is editor of DefendingHistory.com.

Hizb ut-Tahrir History

HIZB UT-TAHRIR (HT) is an international pan-Islamic organisation whose primary aim is to unite all Muslim countries into a single Islamic state, or Caliphate, under strict Islamic Law. The notion of the Caliphate dates back to the seventh century.

Originally founded in 1953 in Jerusalem by Taqiuddin an-Nabhani, a Palestinian court clerk, the organisation has become truly global in its reach. Currently under the global leadership of Ata Abu Rashta, HT has a membership possibly as high as one million people across 40 countries around the globe. Its organizational structure marks the group out, as unlike groups such as Al-Qaeda that operate loosely on a franchise model, HT is rigorously hierarchical and run centrally from the Middle East.

Originally focusing its efforts in the Arab world, Hizb ut-Tahrir did not become active in Britain until 1986. Syrian born Omar Bakri Muhammad, formerly a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, founded the British group and nurtured it from its tiny beginnings into one

of Britain's most active and sizeable Islamic organisations with an estimated membership of around 8,000. Bakri Muhammad led the organisation for ten years before splitting away in 1996 to form the far more extreme Al-Muhajiroun with Anjem Choudary.

HT UK is currently led by Dr Abdul Wahid.

The core international

aim of HT is the re-creation of a unified and centrally administered Islamic state ruled under strict Islamic law. However, unlike proscribed Islamist groups such as Al-Muhajiroun, Hizb claim to restrict their desire to create a Caliphate to existing Muslim countries only. In the UK and the West it claims that it is focused solely on "building the

case for Political Islam and defending the Ummah and Islam."

Controversies

While they remain legal in Britain and most of Europe, they are banned in Russia and widely proscribed across the Middle East and South Asia and Central Asia. Their legality in Britain has remained an issue of



HIZB UT-TAHRIR: HATEFUL BELIEFS

Hizb ut-Tahrir's particularistic interpretation of Islamic Law results in numerous extreme and illiberal positions laid out in their draft constitution. Their views are highly misogynist, and they argue that "the primary role of a woman is that of a mother and wife," and they are not allowed to "take control of ruling" which bars women from becoming the Khaleefah or a judge. They also demand the segregation and the covering up of women. They call for homosexuality

to be made illegal and strongly oppose same sex marriage and are also outspoken opponents of Western style democracy and instead favor a single elected Khaleefah with suffrage being restricted to Muslims only.

In addition, much of their rhetoric crosses the line from anti-Zionism and enters the realm of open antisemitism. As well as calling for the destruction of Israel they have openly stated, "In origin, no one likes the Jews except the Jews. [...] The American

people do not like the Jews nor do the Europeans, because the Jews by their very nature do not like anyone else."

The National Union of Students (NUS) passed motions in 2004 and 2005 explicitly censuring HT. In 2004, NUS Conference passed a motion applying its No Platform Policy to HT, Al-Muhajiroun and others. In 2006, NUS Conference held a debate over a proposed motion to remove HT from the "No Platform Policy," but it did not pass. More recently Taji

Mustafa, Chief Media Representative of HT UK, has controversially claimed that the chief cause of on street grooming is "the liberal values of the society that we live in," and that "People need to question the liberal values which have led us to where we are."

HT tread the line very finely, and despite the government feeling unable to proscribe the group, it is clear that their often controversial rhetoric makes them an extremist organisation.



contention. Following the London bombings in 2005, Tony Blair announced his intention to ban the group but backtracked after warnings that such an action might drive them underground. Despite a general consensus regarding the group's extreme nature, several reviews of the group have failed to provide sufficient evidence to legally justify an outright ban.

David Cameron also supported a ban whilst in opposition.

While the organisation is explicitly committed to non-violent methods, they have been marred by continual criticism over the group's extremism; and while it does not engage in terrorist acts itself, it has been accused of being a "conveyor belt for terrorists."

In the past it has supported violent groups such as Islamic

Jihad, Hamas and Jama'ah Islamiyyah.

The organisation is more outwardly moderate in the UK in more recent years; however, on the eve of the first Gulf War Bakri Muhammad called for Muslims to assassinate John Major, for which he was arrested. In the 1980s and 1990s they also published leaflets calling for Jews to be killed.

Many believe HT to be a college of ideological indoctrination that, while abstaining from terrorism itself, creates fertile recruits for more extreme organisations. For example, in 2003, while searching the houses of Omar Khan Sharif and Asif Mohammed Hanif, following their failed attempt to blow up a bar in Tel Aviv, the police found HT literature.

KEY PEOPLE

Omar Bakri Muhammad

(Born- Syria 1958) Founded the UK branch of Hizb ut Tahrir in 1986 and remained leader until 1996. He was formally a member of the Muslim Brotherhood and left HT to form Al-Muhajiroun with Anjem Choudary. He has been the mentor of many of Britain's most extreme Islamists. He has become more openly extreme since leaving HT praising 9/11 as 'magnificent' and is now banned from entering the UK following a decision by Charles Clarke.



OMAR BAKRI MUHAMMAD

Ata Abu Rashta

(Born- 1943 in Mandate Palestine) Current global leader of HT taking control in April 2003. He joined HT in the mid-1950s and worked closely with the founding members. He worked primarily in Jordan and has been detained numerous times by the Jordanian government.



Taqiuddin al-Nabhani

(Born 1909 Haifa- Died 1977 Beirut) Originally founded Hizb ut Tahrir in Jerusalem in 1953 and remained its global leader until his death in 1977.



DR Abdul Wahid

Chairman of UK Executive of Hizb ut Tahrir Britain.



Taji Mustafa

Chief media representative and member of the UK Executive Committee.

He is an IT professional with a degree from the University of North London. He recently stirred up controversy while addressing a HT conference in Australia after being called a "hate preacher" amid calls for him to be denied a visa.

Dr Imran Waheed

Chief media advisor for HT UK. He also works as a psychiatrist at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham.



Sajjad Khan

Chief political advisor of HT UK and editor of the New Civilisation Magazine.



SAJJAD KHAN



For information on
other hate groups visit
www.hopenothate.org.uk/hate-groups/

We Are The Many

Political and trade union leaders and celebrities joined 46,000 people in just 24 hours in signing an open letter to the Daily Mirror stating quite proudly that the extremists are the few but 'We Are The Many'.



Prayer Centre passed

SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL last month gave the go-ahead for the first Prayer Centre in Shrewsbury. The planning application had become fiercely contested by the EDL and the BNP, who both launched social media campaigns against it. Some of the postings were so extreme and threatening that three people have been arrested.

In response to this outburst of hatred and prejudice, a HOPE not hate meeting in Shrewsbury decided to issue an open letter in support of the Muslim community's right to worship.

710 people, all but 54 from Shrewsbury, co-signed the letter in just five days. It was handed in yesterday to the leader of Shropshire Council.

The Bangladeshi Welfare Society, which had bought the dis-used building, were overwhelmed and heartened by the support of those who signed the letter. Up until now, the local Muslim community had to use a room in a local church.

The letter itself received substantial coverage in the *Shropshire Star* and on Radio Shropshire. It has also brought together dozens of local people who are now wanting to continue positive anti-racist campaigning in the town.



Representatives of the Bangladeshi Welfare Society and Shrewsbury's Inter Faith Forum join HOPE not hate supporters at Shirehall

Glastonbury

A MIX OF pop and politics on the legendary LeftField at Glastonbury saw a coalition of activists and musicians come together to discuss whether music is enough to combat hatred. Organised by Billy Bragg, singers' Louise Distras and Sam Duckworth (Get Cape) joined HOPE not hate's Matthew Collins for a panel discussion in front of hundreds of people. Duckworth pointed to problems with social media "exploiting tensions and telling lies" before continuing, "this is why we need HOPE not hate."

Wakefield based singer Louise Distras, who campaigned against bullying in the wake of the murder

of Sarah Lancaster, spoke passionately about hate crime. "I'm angry, I'm angry about hatred and injustice and I take to my guitar to write and sing about it, but that is not everything that can be done. I'm just a small part of what can be done..what has to be done, to turn people away from senseless hatred and the victimising of people based on the way they look."

Collins admitted that even when he was an activist in the far-right he still listened to artists' like Billy Bragg, and drew on the role of the mainstream media in demonising the Muslim community. "The mainstream media continue to present Muslims in Britain as some kind of cultural threat, but the media

ASLEF

THE TRAIN DRIVERS' Union, ASLEF, voted at its May conference to back drivers who do not wish to transport EDL or BNP activists to demonstrations. The conference – meeting in Edinburgh – called for drivers to be allowed to refuse to transport gangs of racists if they feel they present a danger to other passengers or staff.

Matthew Collins from the HOPE not hate campaign told delegates in an often moving and humorous speech, about his time in the far-right, before finishing with "Carrying fascists is like carrying a disease from town to town."

"It is not an issue of freedom of speech, it is a health and safety issue for staff, passengers and the general public."

ASLEF's general secretary Mick Whelan told HOPE not hate after the vote: "We believe it is important to resist all forms of racism and fascism and the protection of the public and our members of staff."

Speaking the next evening at the Union's gala dinner, only hours after the murder of Drummer Lee Rigby, Matthew joined with Mick Whelan in condemning the barbaric murder of the soldier and called upon union members to "stand firm and stand tough" against those who would whip up hatred in the wake of the murder.

themselves do not seem to be clear on what the culture is that is under threat. I view the EDL as just a symptom of a far wider problem in society."

Speaking of the role of musicians, Bragg surmised



UNISON makes anti-racist commitment

UNISON GENERAL Secretary Dave Prentis pledged to continue the union's support to rid society of racism and extremism by promising to double the budget its anti-racism budget. He also promised to ensure that the union continued to campaign against the BNP and EDL but also to challenge the increasingly xenophobic UKIP.

Dave made this pledge during his key note speech at last month's Unison conference.

He cited the union's proud support for HOPE not hate and in doing so echoed the warm words of support given by the out-going union President Chris Tansley, who had made HOPE not hate its Presidential charity of the year.

As usual HOPE not hate ran a hugely successful stall at the conference and signed up over 300 people who were interested in getting more involved.



Matthew Collins tells the Glastonbury Festival about Hope Not Hate's work.
Photo: Pete Dunwell

London recruits

Dave Porter meets the white British students who played an important role in the ANC's propaganda campaign in apartheid South Africa

SECRET RENDEZVOUS in hotel rooms, exploding 'bucket bombs', false-bottomed suitcases: it sounds like something out of a James Bond film not the activities of a small group of London anti-apartheid activists.

But this was no ordinary group of people trying to change the South African system with boycotts and letter-writing campaigns, but young idealistic converts attempting to infiltrate from within.

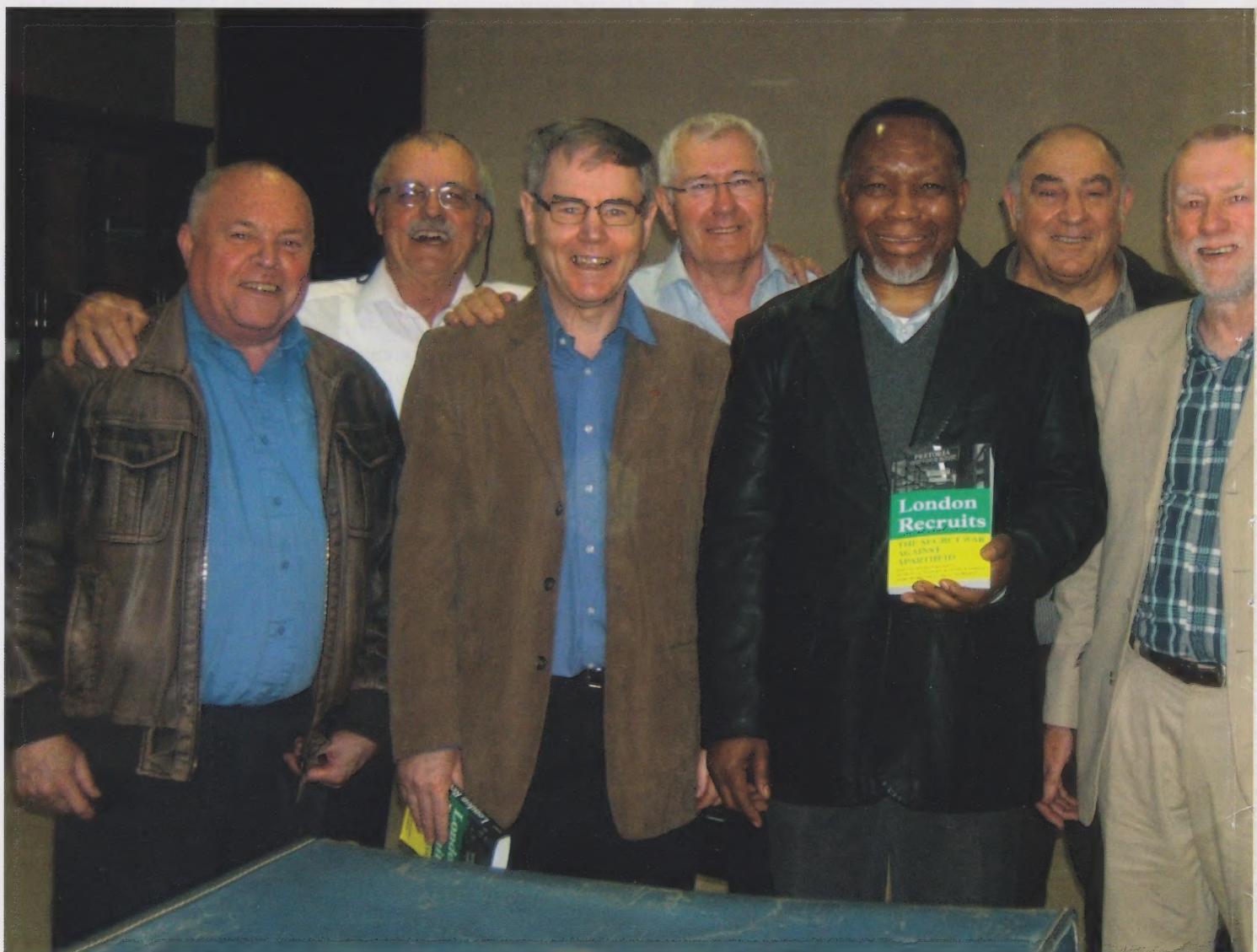
The so-called London Recruits were hand-picked by exiled members of the ANC-SACP with the sole purpose of smuggling banned literature into the country to keep the struggle alive.

After the jailing of Nelson Mandela in 1964 and the crackdown on ANC members in South Africa, political exiles in London such as Ronnie Kasrils were under orders to recruit volunteers in the UK and around the world who would be willing to act as couriers.

The dramatic events of those days are recalled by one of the 'recruits', Ken Keable, in his book, *London Recruits, The Secret War Against Apartheid*. In total there were more than 50 such volunteers who risked their personal safety by flying into the country with illicit material, and the book vividly features their recollections of the time.

Many recruits like Ken came from the Young Communist League. They all had to be white and not known to the South African regime so as not to arouse suspicion.

Ken himself flew out to Johannesburg in 1968 carrying more 1,200 letters which he subsequently distributed to the Indian community in South Africa – including the postage. He later went to

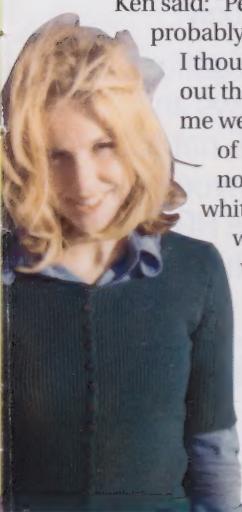


Durban with friend Pete Smith where the pair planted exploding leaflet bombs at a bus station. These devices were actually harmless but had the advantage of showering ANC leaflets up into the air.

The leaflets were typically worded: "The ANC says to Vorster and his gang: Your days are coming to an end. We will take back our country!"

Ken said: "Personally I was not fearful, probably because I was so young. I thought it was so well thought out the chances of them catching me were very slim. The genius of it was that the regime was not on the lookout for young white people – in fact they were desperate for young white people to go there."

Ken, who has since met up with fellow recruits in South Africa for a reunion, says he has been told by the leadership of the ANC that what the recruits did made a real difference.



He said: "It helped the ANC to reorganise and rebuild the movement after the Rivonia trial. It told the people that the ANC was not defeated – which was what the regime was saying."

For reasons of security no one knew who the other recruits were. They operated clandestinely across major cities in South Africa and played a significant role in helping to build up support for the ANC, including unfurling banners in public and even smuggling weapons occasionally.

And as well as leaflets, cassette recorders and hidden amplifiers would be secretly placed in the baskets of bikes which would suddenly start broadcasting subversive message and slogans to passers-by.

Their adventures could sometimes have a comical element, as the book explains. Graeme Whyte and Denis Walshe were on a mission in Durban in 1971 and were preparing leaflet bombs in a hotel. Their room was covered in wires, time switches, a false-bottomed suitcase, and stacks of ANC leaflets. Despite locking the door they were taken

into South Africa in large quantities.

Mary Chamberlain, now emeritus professor of Caribbean History at Oxford Brookes University, travelled to Cape Town with her then boyfriend and now husband Carey Harrison under the guise of being a newly-wed couple. They took with them 20 tea wooden chests with false bottoms filled with 2,000 booklets on the South African Communist Party and 5,000 other leaflets. These then had to be surreptitiously posted out over the course of several weeks.

"It was a huge, huge mail drop. We had to buy the stamps in small batches so that we didn't arouse suspicion. There were a few hair-raising moments," she said.

Looking back 50 years later with justifiable pride, Mary, who was 23 at the time she was recruited, said: "It's a very strange feeling. We had to bury it very, very deep for security reasons. Then we discover that actually we had made a big difference, that we had intervened at a really critical time.

"Our role has been acknowledged and that feels very, very nice. There was relief

“*It helped the ANC to reorganise and rebuild the movement after the Rivonia trial. It told the people that the ANC was not defeated* **”**

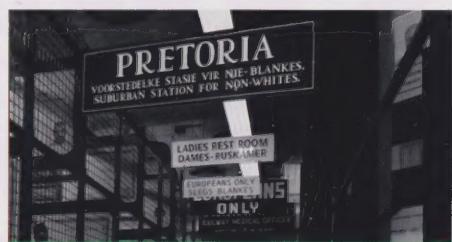
aback when the maid nonchalantly walked in on them making the bombs – before swiftly fleeing the room.

Flummoxed, they immediately ran after the maid and persuaded her back into the room to show her they were on her side, handing her one of the leaflets to read. They were not betrayed.

But for others the consequences could be more drastic, with three volunteers being arrested and tortured.

Ken, who remained silent on his work and that of other recruits for more than 30 years, says recruits felt justification in what they did both because of the lack of international support for the struggles of the ANC and because of the particular way in which British business and politics propped up the apartheid regime. And he says the struggle against racism is still very much alive today round the world.

The main activities of the London Recruits lasted from 1967-1971 and other clandestine work carried on sporadically right up until the '80s. Ken cites the setting up of a 'safari' company by Joe Slovo which enabled arms to be smuggled



London Recruits

THE SECRET WAR AGAINST APARTHEID

EDITED BY KEN KEABLE
INTRODUCTION BY RONNIE KASRILS
FOREWORD BY Z. PALLO JORDAN

that we could talk about it at last, and meeting up with other recruits last year there was a real sense of pride and of what solidarity – international solidarity – can achieve."

Ronnie Kasrils says of the London Recruits, who also included Katherine Levine, Tom Bell, that "What they shared was a readiness to risk life and limb in the struggle of another country." ●

■ *London Recruits, The Secret War Against Apartheid* is published by Merlin Press.

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